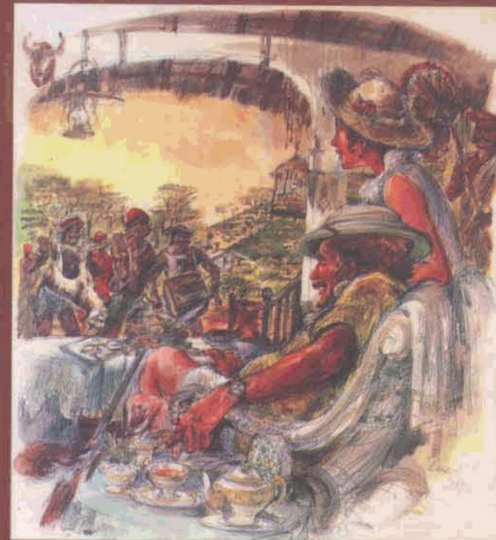
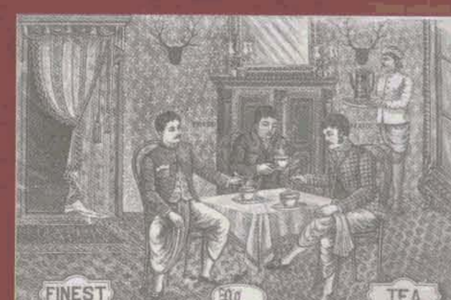




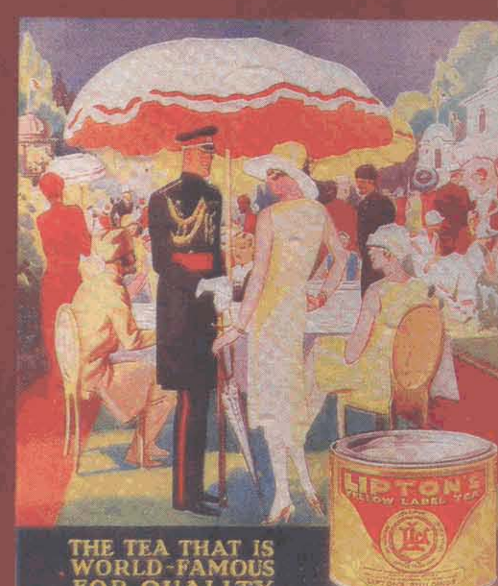
FROM AN IMPERIAL PRODUCT TO A NATIONAL DRINK

The Culture of Tea Consumption in Modern India

GAUTAM BHADRA







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Gautam Bhadra

Published along with the exhibition of Billboards, Advertisements, Posters, Calendars, Cartoons, Drawings, Illustrations, Photographs and Lobby Cards

Selections from Hiteshranjan Sanyal Memorial Archive - Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta and
from the private collections of Parimal Roy and Others

Curated by the Archival Staff of the CSSSC
Sponsored by Tea Board India, Department of Commerce, Government of India

Exhibition Venue: Gaganendra Pradarshasala, Kolkata 7-13 December, 2005

The Archival staff of the CSSSC thank the following institutions and individuals for their cooperation and support:

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Tarapada Bandyopadhyay

Published by
Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta
in association with
Tea Board India

Digital Restoration and Scanning by
Subhasis Banerjee

Printed by
Laurens & Co. (Printer)
9 Crooked Lane.
Calcutta-700 069

Book Cover and Design by
Arindam Pal and Arup Sen Gupta

Rs. 150

This Project of CSSSC has been a collective venture in which the following persons have been involved:

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The Theme Conceived

How can an avid tea drinker today sympathise with the predicament of *pahalwan* Ramsuk Tewari, an inhabitant of Bundi or perhaps Rewa? As was the tradition, he migrated to Bengal, seeking his fortune. But, alas, within two monsoons Ramsuk turned into a tea addict. It so happened that he began to suffer from dyspepsia and to lose weight daily. In a humourous poem, written for children, Kumudranjan Mallick (1883-1970), a well-known Bengali poet of the 1930s, described his subsequent fate:

Abaseshe ashukher sambad paia
Desh theke dheye elo deshoyali bhaia
Kore dile prathamei cha khaoa-ta bandha
Be-bhashay bolle se kato ki je manda.[1]



fig.1 Ramsuk Tewari



fig.1a Ramsuk Tewari

(At last hearing the news of his illness, a man from his native village came rushing and gave Ramsuk an earful of the choicest in his local dialect and at the very first instance stopped him from drinking tea.) [fig. 1]

Following his country-cousin's diktat, Ramsuk Tewari regained his health and life returned to its familiar ways: Tulsi's Ramayana, a regular diet of *dal-roti* and, of course, no tea. Yet the poem leaves us feeling somewhat ambivalent, as the poet does not sound that keen at all to follow in the footsteps of a reformed Ramsuk. A distant 'good wish' is all that Ramsuk can expect.

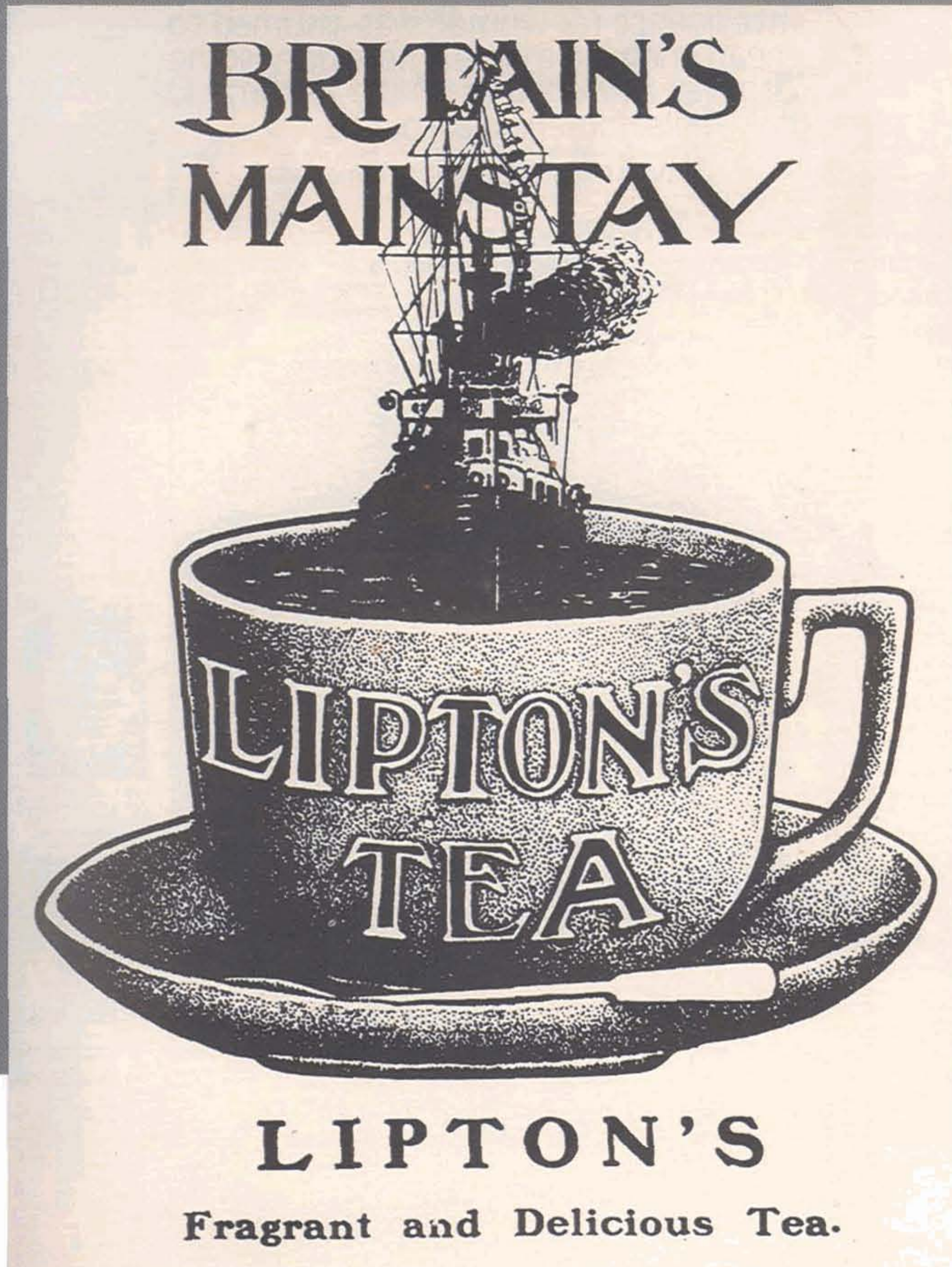


fig. 3 Lipton and the Empire

Tea and the Raj

Darjeeling tea, the best of the genre, in the nineteenth century became 'Darlington tea' in the anglophone dialect, and Cachar Tea, 'Catcher Tea'.[5] Language being one of the most important indices of cultural difference and deference, the implications of such pronunciations are obvious. The customers of tea in most of the nineteenth century were the imperial masters; for them India and its products were appendages to the wealth and power of the British Empire. Geographical exactitude mattered little, as the colonial 'other' was a tolerated marginal, at least in terms of public display, to the imperial self.

The calendar, produced by the Lipton Tea Company in 1922[fig.2], is drawn in vivid colours and shows prominently Field Marshal H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught mounted on horseback, in the posture of a warrior, against the background of a lofty gateway and a distant landscape. The gateway itself is flanked by elaborate architectural structures and designs to enhance its grandeur. The name 'Lipton's Tea' appears at the top in English and unobtrusively on the side of the frame in small letters, written in Urdu, Tamil, Hindi and Gujarati.

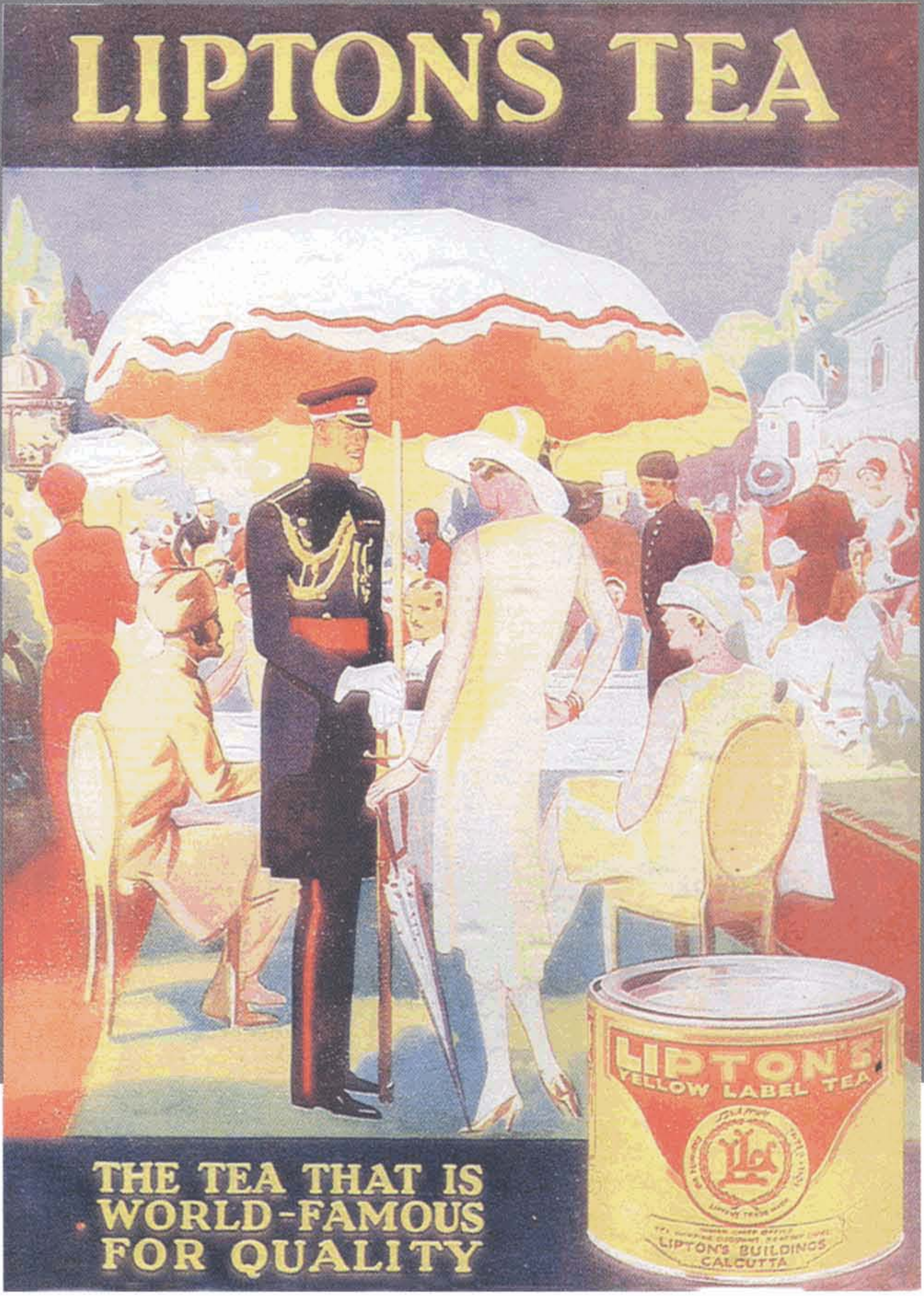


fig. 4 Garden Party

The imposing Duke on horseback, as the embodiment of imperial might, infuses Lipton's Tea with a meaning and a form that are not inherent to it. Tea has been transformed into a sign of the British Empire, signifying its power and domination, and its supremacy in the cultural hierarchy.

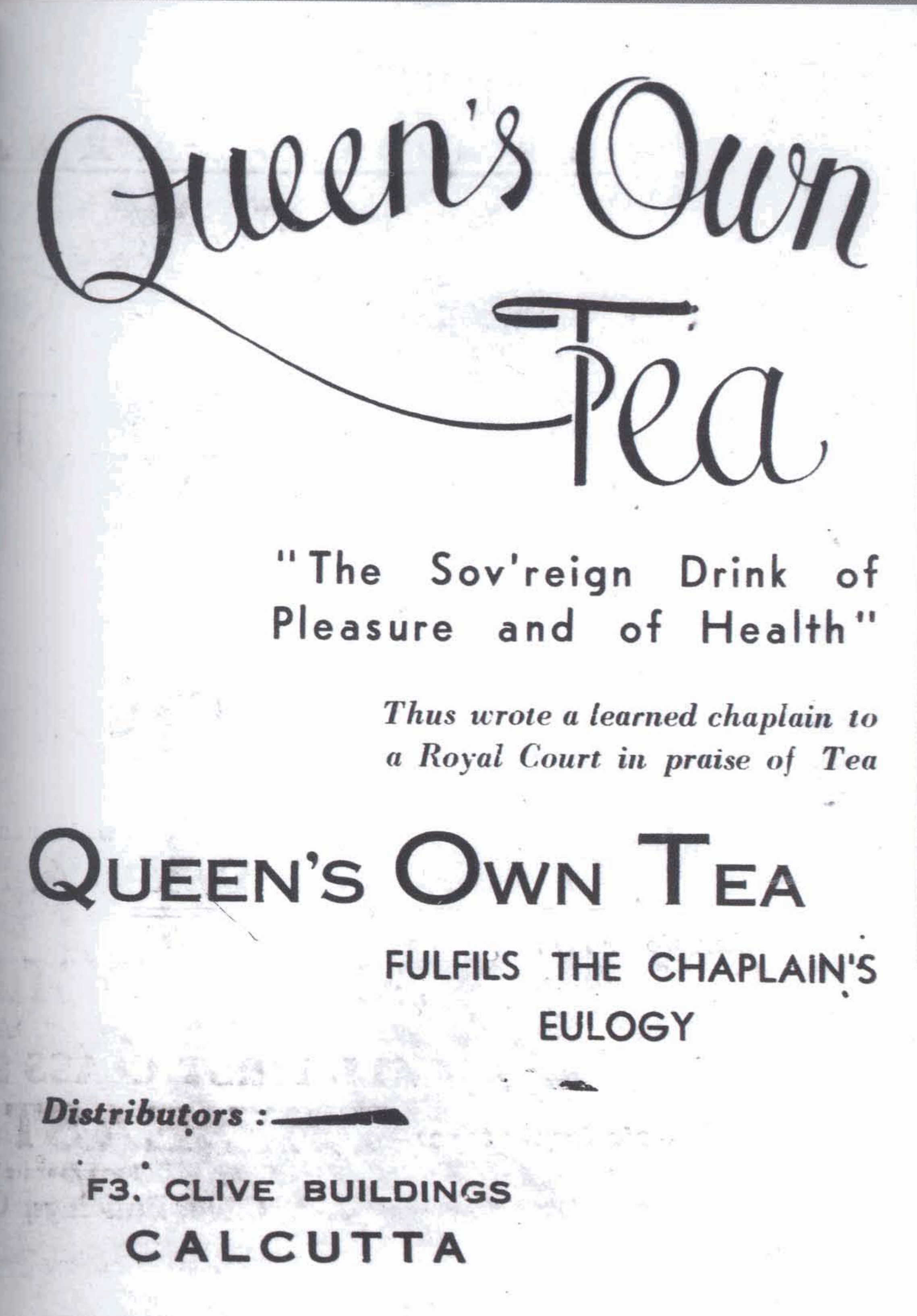
Situating the practice of drinking tea in the arena of the British Empire involves a number of referents [figs. 3 and 4] embedded in elaborate ritual and social paraphernalia. Extravagant tea parties at garden plantations and clubs provided the ideal space of social intermingling among the Europeans. The Lipton Tea Company could hardly miss the opportunity to use this sort of social occasion as a theme for promotional enterprise, placing its product within the ambience of a gala party in order to flaunt the excellence of its brand all over the world.[6] Again, nowhere India, the colonial jewel and production centre of tea was explicitly visible.

In marked contrast to this type of representation, the poster hanging on a wall of the famous Spence's Hotel of Calcutta in the 19th century points to a somewhat different perception.



fig.5 'Queen's own Tea'

The advertisement [fig. 5] has a spatial looseness of appearance created by the alignment of the letters. The strength of its message, however, lies in two contrasting significations, visual and literal, placed in distinct compartments. The chaplain's words and the brand name of the product evoke imperial royalty. In contrast, the visual on the left depicts a *babu*, dressed in *dhoti* and *piran*, yawning indolently after a sound night's sleep. A cup of steaming hot tea is placed before him on a table. The figure borders on caricature and



captures fun and comfort. The tea drinker, a jovial and ease-loving babu, enters the visual world of the representation of tea drinking in counterpoint to the earlier stern and vigilant Field Marshall of the Raj. These two posters have been displayed in this order in a deliberate curatorial move for it is through confrontation that each complements the other.

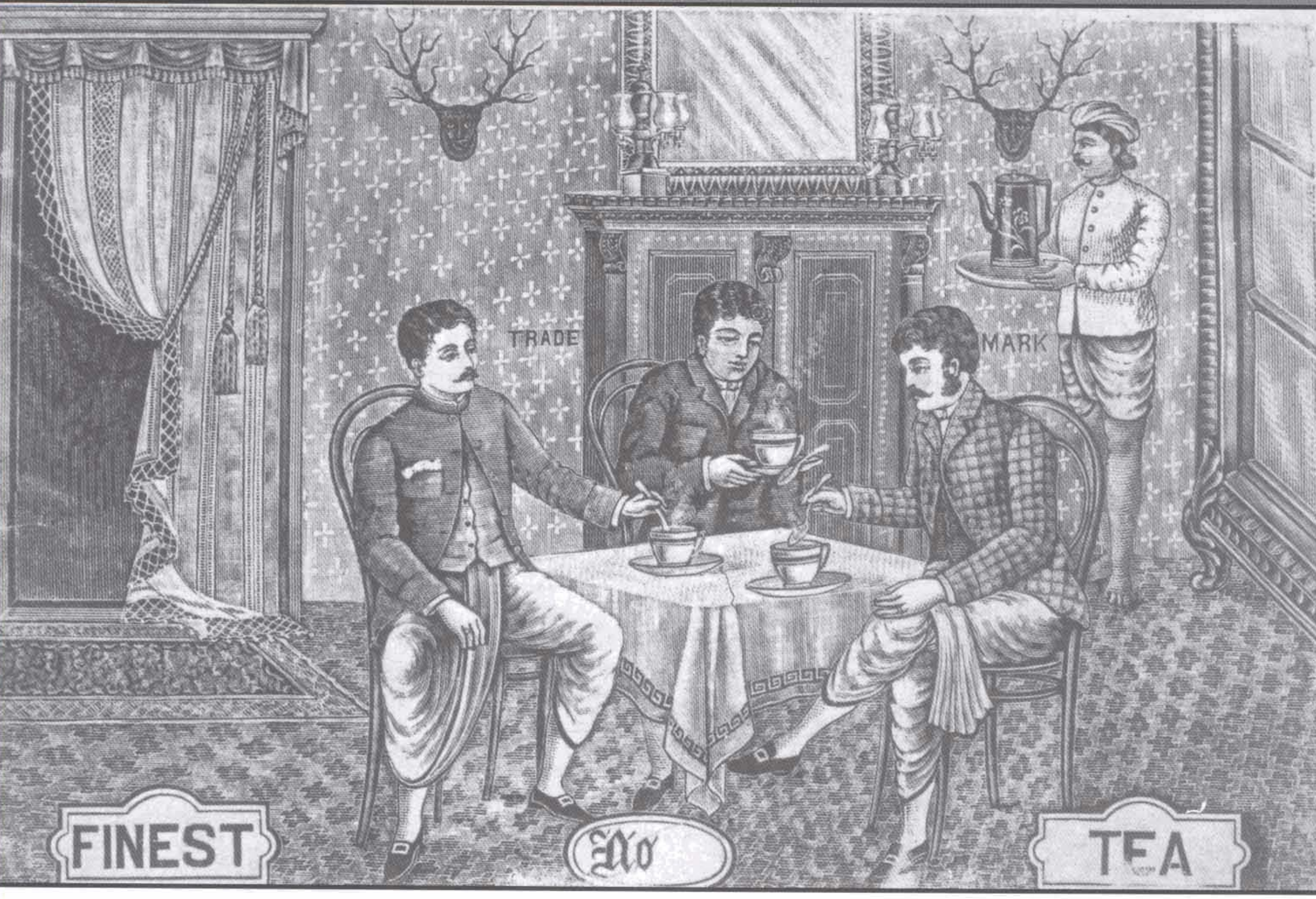


fig.6 Babus' Drawing Room

During this period, the drawing-room culture of the nouveau riche among the indigenous elites, as Rosinka Chaudhuri observes, was evolving into a distinct shape, registering a clear spatial arrangement of furniture and preference for the décor of the room.[7] Costly tea sets, necessary arrangements for the serving of tea and a habit of drinking tea with guests nicely fitted the bill for the cultural aspirations of this class, eager to refashion traditional sociability after western norms.

This engraving [fig.6] by Preo Gopal Das (1870-1926) shows three persons chatting in a well-furnished drawing room over cups of tea. The lettering of the caption, 'Finest Tea', looms large in the foreground as a *khidmatgar* or a servant, his *dhoti* well above his knee, stands in the background. Preo Gopal's engraving heightens the effect of embourgeoisement through detail. In the picture, for example, the *babu* sitting on the left, dressed in a jacket and a *dhoti* and wearing pump shoes, is stirring the drink with a teaspoon. Through such numerous and exquisite details the design of this engraving vividly represents the hybridity of our colonial modernity, tea being one of its hinges. Tea drinking, again, becomes a moving sign - a marker of cultural refinement and social mobility during the days of the Raj.



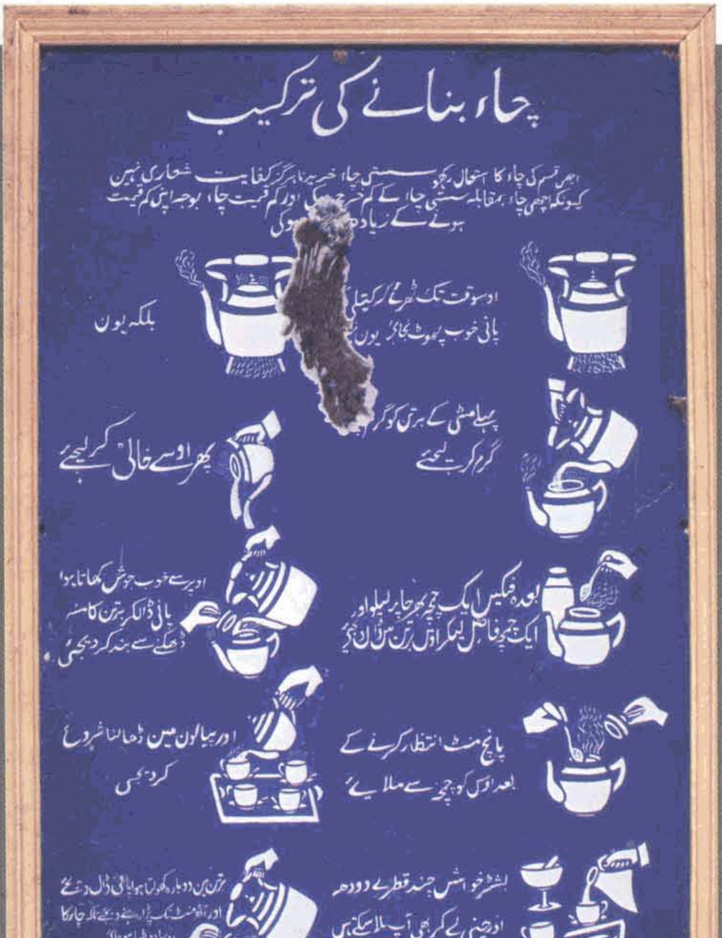
fig.7 Planter's Raj

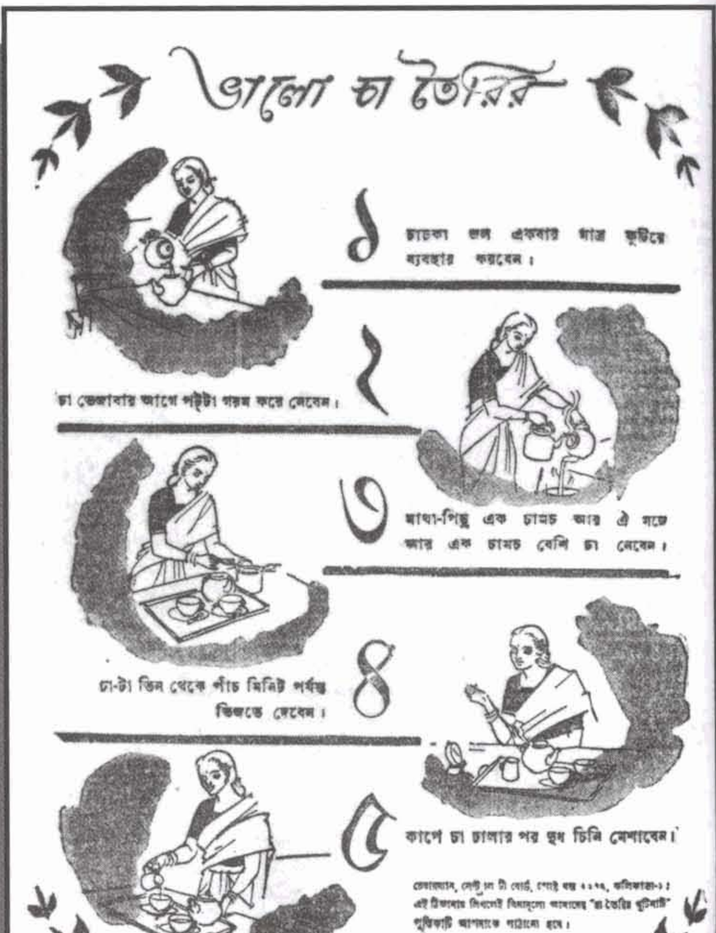
During the 1980s, Ranen Ayan Dutt (b.1925), a consummate artist, blended the numerous significations of tea drinking with the matrix of power surrounding the practice through the representation of a garden manager in a colourful picture [fig.7]. Drawn for a calendar sponsored by a tea company, the illustration attempts to portray the subtle games of power around occasions of tea drinking. The tableau-like painting shows a tea-garden manager on an elevated space wearing a bush shirt, shorts and a sola pith hat, flanked by a female companion standing close by and a *punkha-bearer* at some distance. An elegant teapot and a cup filled with tea are on a side table occupying the foreground of the picture. In the background, on a lower level, the natives stand, gesticulate and perform. The composition suggests a clear hierarchy and a dominant gaze. The yellow tinge of light in the mellowing evening sky adds poignancy to the scene. The artist, with fine brushstrokes, has drawn all the expected markers of power and conjured up an image where the tea-planters' world, in the eyes of an Indian, has almost become synonymous with the British Raj.[8]

Trained to Drink, Time to Oppose

A 'reliable authority' informs us that around the year 1886, Indra, Brahma, Barun and Narayan, four gods from the Hindu pantheon, came down from heaven to observe and experience the achievements of English rule in India. They made a meticulous survey, listing the innovations that had ensued in the habits, manners and fashions of the common people. They commented, with hilarity and unusual acuteness, on the follies and fun of addiction to various narcotics and drinks, but tea drinking never figured in their list.[9]

Richard Blechynden, the propaganda wizard of tea associations, and H. W. Newby and John Harper, his successors in the Tea Cess Committee, would have readily agreed with the observation of the gods. In the two decades following the First World War, the Committee launched a sustained 'educational propaganda' through demonstrations and free distribution. Demonstration parties comprising both men and women fanned out in public places like fairs and railway stations, and even approached individual households to allow them to hold a show and persuade the family members to sip a cup of delicious and healthy tea free of cost.[10]



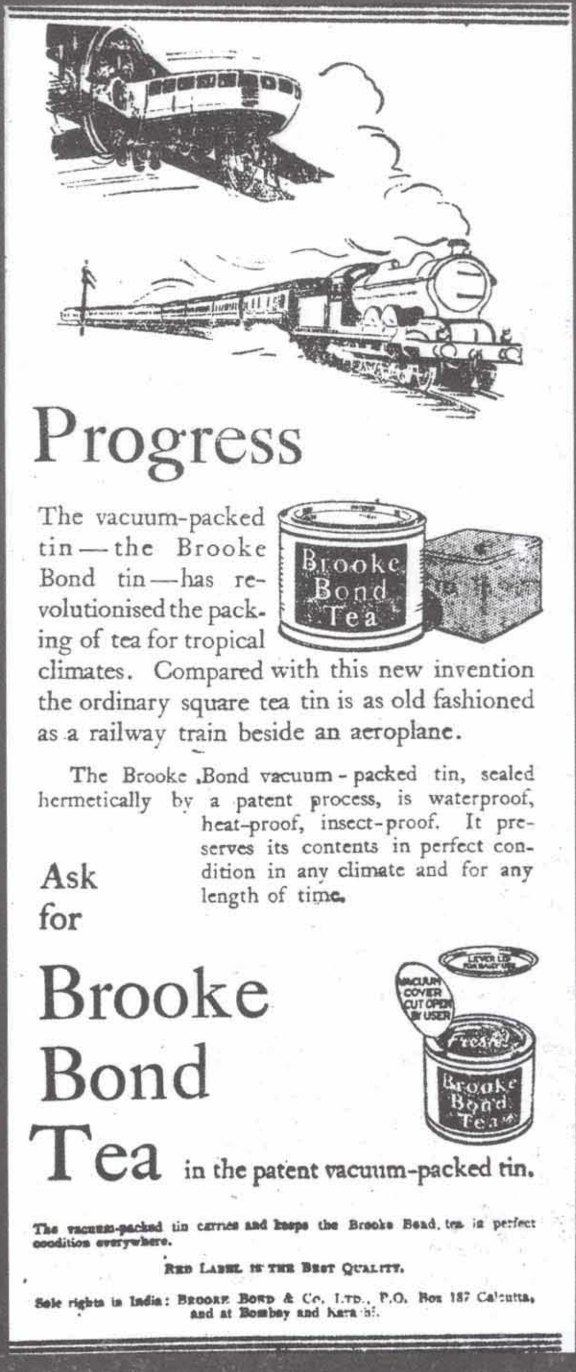


figs.8 & 9 A Perfect Drink



fig.10 Sales Poster

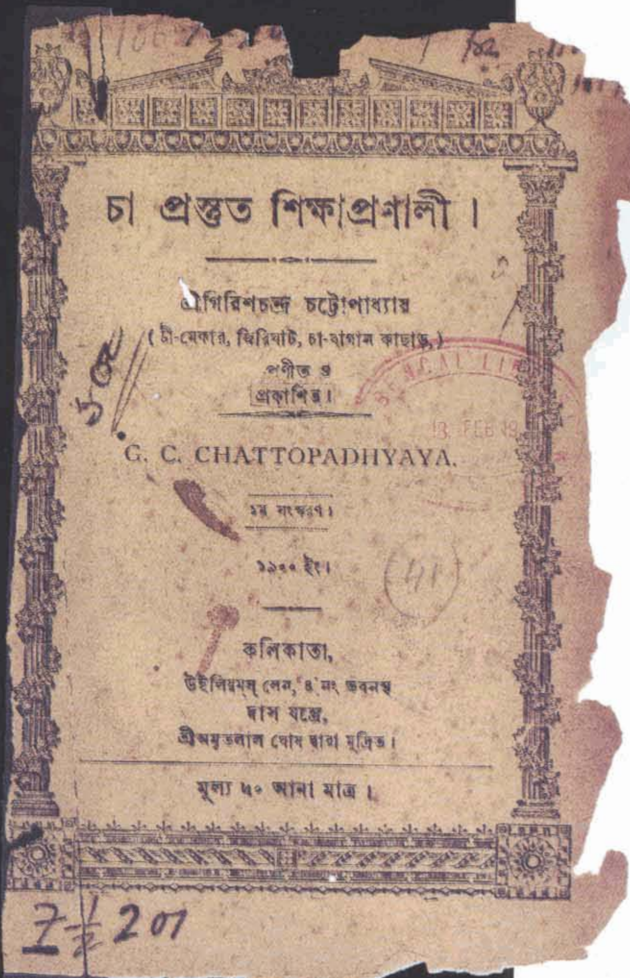
fig. 11 Vacuum Tin



Since then railway platforms and retail shops were decorated with numerous signboards and colourful posters [figs. 8 and 9] carrying detailed instructions in vernacular languages for preparing the perfect drink.

The private companies did not lag behind. In the early 1920s, when Brooke Bond, the arch rival of Lipton appeared in the market announcing the efficacy of vacuum-packed tins as a perfect container for tea and made a dent in Lipton's hold over the retail market [fig. 11]. The innovation had been considered as an emblem of scientific progress. In a long drawn advertisement campaign, Lipton's Ltd. finally retorted with a slogan 'It is tea that we advertise not the tin'. This campaign is a landmark in the history of advertisement in India; it made tea a well-known product in cities and towns.[11]

Balmer Lawrie & Co., with their experience of working as agents for many tea plantations in India, took up a different strategy for the promotion of the product in the retail market. Simple announcement in bold type served their purpose of mass communication [fig. 10].


চা প্রস্তুত শিক্ষাপ্রণালী।

শ্রীগিরিশচন্দ্র চট্টোপাধ্যায়
(টী-মেকার, ঝিরিঘাট, চা-বাগান কাছাড়,)
প্রণীত ও
প্রকাশিত।

G. C. CHATTOPADHYAYA.

১ম সংস্করণ।

১৯০০ ইং।

কলিকাতা,
উইলিয়মস্ লেন, ৪ নং ভবনস্থ
দাস যন্ত্রে,
শ্রীঅমৃতলাল ঘোষ দ্বারা মুদ্রিত।

মূল্য ৫০ আনা মাত্র।

fig.12 A Tea Maker's Manual

Personal initiatives too were not lacking. Girishchandra Chatttopadhyay, at the beginning of the last century, wrote one of the earliest manuals for tea plantation and preparation in a vernacular language[12] [fig.12].

Around the same period, to popularize tea drinking, Debendranath Mallick (1852-1926), the owner of the trading concern 'D.N. Mullick & Co.', began to sell a cup of tea at the nominal rate of one paisa [fig13]. This early effort was not successful and he had to wind up his business eventually.[13]

Along with this insistence on communicating in local languages, a company like Lipton Ltd., that had already won an award for tea promotion in the Chicago World Fair of 1893, produced attractive packages of tea for wealthy customers.[14] The label bearing the image of a sumptuous 'little breakfast' or *chota hazri* [figs. 14 and 15] indicated a refined life style which many of the *bhadralok* were fond of. Dwijendralal Roy (1863-1913), the dramatist, songwriter and satirist, expressed in a humourous ode, his feeling that the regular supply of a single cup of morning tea was heavenly bliss.[15] With the beverage, a piece of toast and a morsel of egg were also welcome. A report of the early decades of the 20th century suggests that a cup of tea in the morning made one a perfect Bengali gentleman, while sipping twice a day turned him into a *sahib*. Ceaseless craving for this new beverage, however, would brand him as a *chinaman* (a man from China).[16] 'Tea-mindedness' among the urban Bengali enthusiasts during the 30s had acquired a new colloquial coinage *chatal* ('cha' or tea with 'tal' as a suffix), or tea addict, a word that has the obvious cultural resonance of *matal*, the Bengali word for a tippler.[17]



fig.13 Debendranath Mallick



figs.14 &15 Little Breakfast I & II

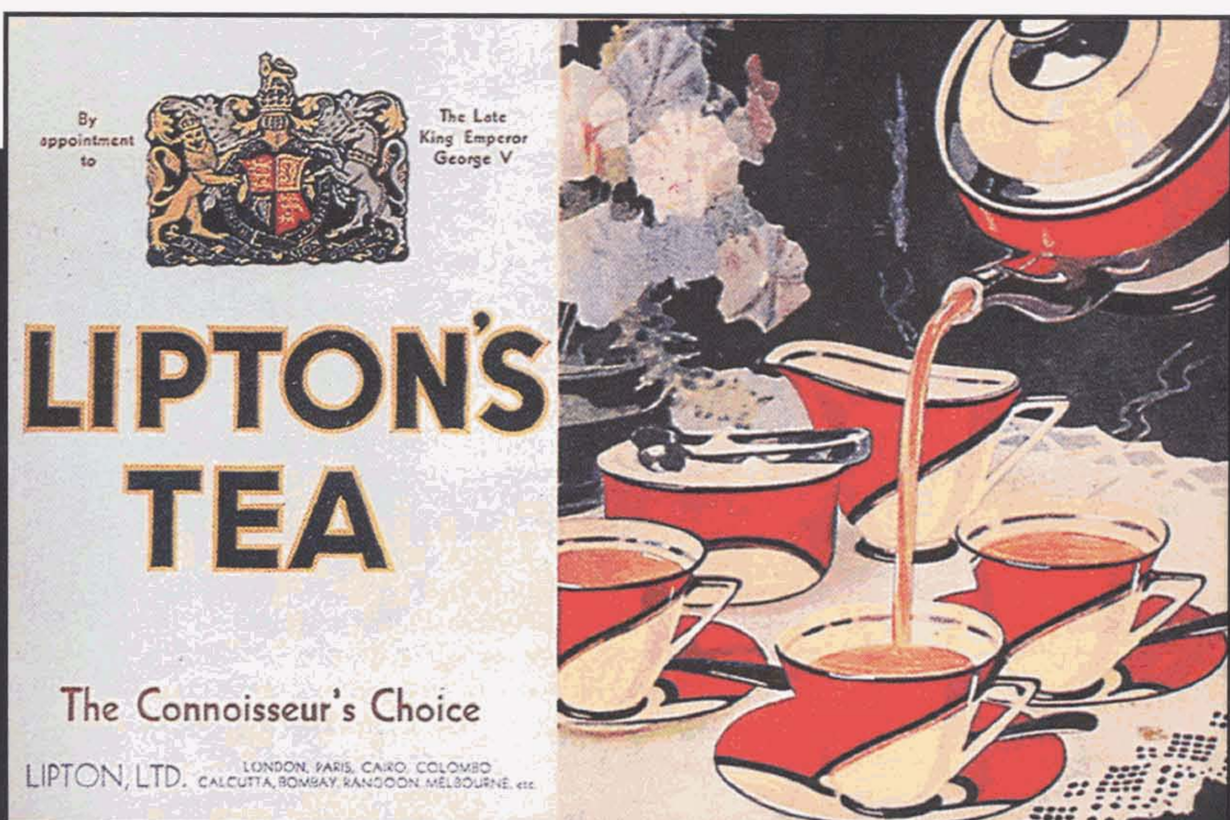
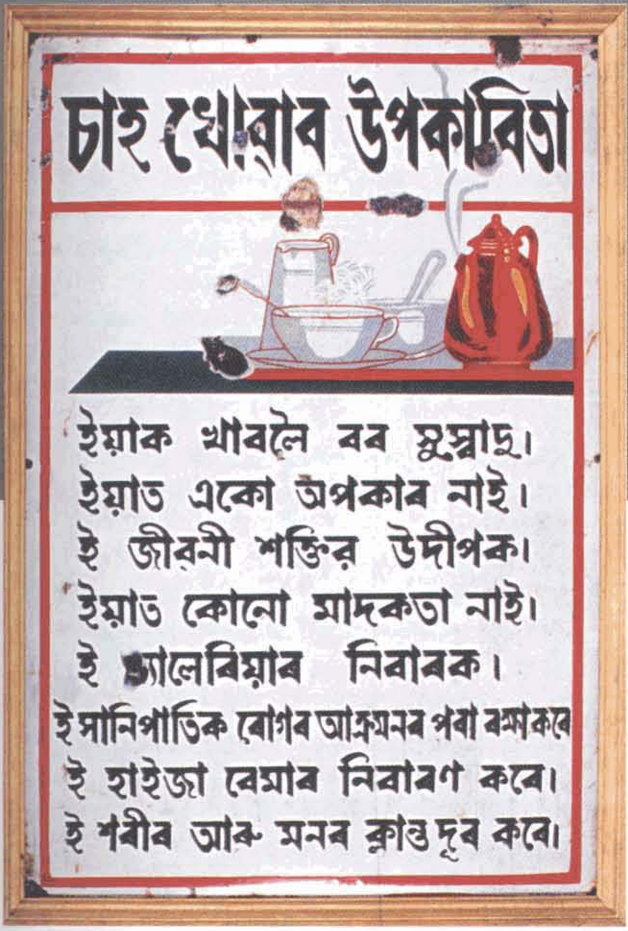




fig. 16 A Pucca Tea Addict

Personal antipathy and social opposition to tea in the public press had equally matched the enthusiasm for it. In 1880s, at a time when the campaign to expose the oppression of the plantation labourers was at its peak, Sundari Mohan Das (1857-1950), the renowned doctor and Krishna Kumar Mitra (1852-1936), the nationalist leader, gave up tea drinking for good as a mark of protest.[18] Annie Besant (1847-1933), the theosophist, was said to chide an inattentive student as a nincompoop, fit to be a road-side tea-vendor.[19] During 1930s, Maraimalai Adigal (1876-1950), the father of the Pure Tamil Movement, and his associates argued against the use of tea, coffee and other beverages in place of *neeragaram* or a drink produced from fermented rice.[20]



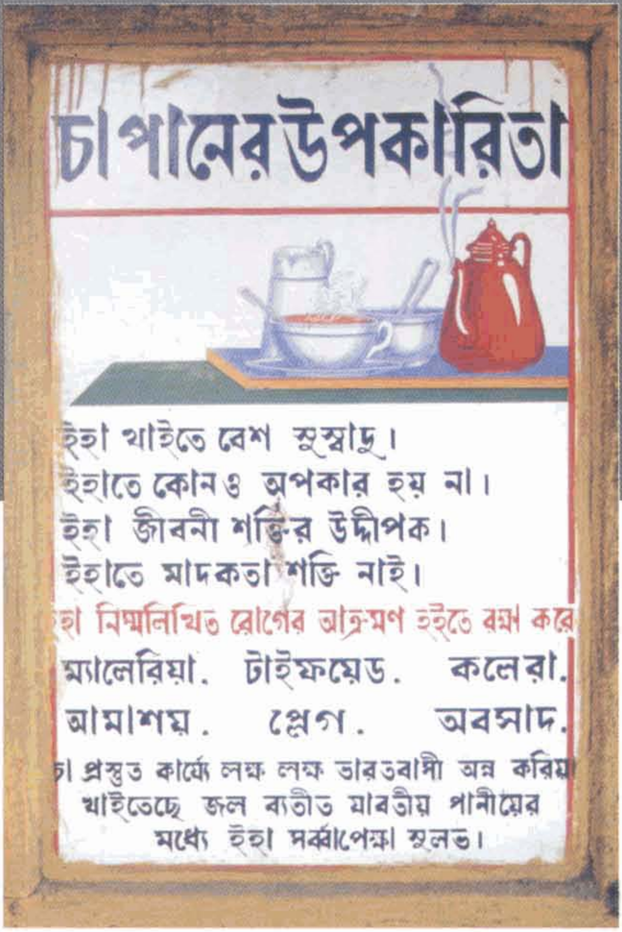


fig. 17 & 18 Tea as a Health Drink

In Bengal, Prafulla Chandra Roy (1861-1944), the scientist and *swadeshi* entrepreneur, vigorously opposed the habit of tea drinking both on the grounds of health and morality. He argued that tea as a stimulant ultimately tended to impair one's brain and spoil one's appetite. It also made innocent housewives addicted and wayward, thus corrupting the pristine and pure domain of the *zenana* (*suddha antahpur*)[21] - an anxiety clearly based on gender bias.

To prove his point, Prafulla Chandra Roy had himself drawn a caricature of a typical tea addict [fig.16]. The details are quite revealing. A rickety body, torn shoes, tattered clothes, dejected posture, the floor strewn with cigarette butts, a big teapot on the table, and above all an unshaven and haggard face,-all these mark the tea addict as an inveterate derelict.

The campaign for tea, however, held its ground and carried on with its own propaganda. A number of posters hung in public places enumerating the beneficial qualities of this drink both for the health of the individual and the wealth of the nation [figs. 17 and 18]. Many local entrepreneurs opened up small companies even with the paid up capital of one lakh rupees for the production and sale of tea. The Bikrampur Tea and Industry Co.Ltd. of Munshiganj, Dacca division of Eastern Bengal, is just one of such successful ventures. During 1930s, Jatindra Mohan Dutta (1894-1975), the narrator of clever anecdotes of urban life in Calcutta wrote that the womenfolk of aristocratic households habitually used tea as an effective antidote for the post-drunken hangover of their alcoholic husbands.[22] In Tamilnadu, the Brahmins favoured coffee, rejecting tea as a working-class and non-Brahmin drink. In Eastern India, however, the landlords and the middle class took up tea both for health reasons and as a stimulant, a substitute for the injurious and costly alcohol.

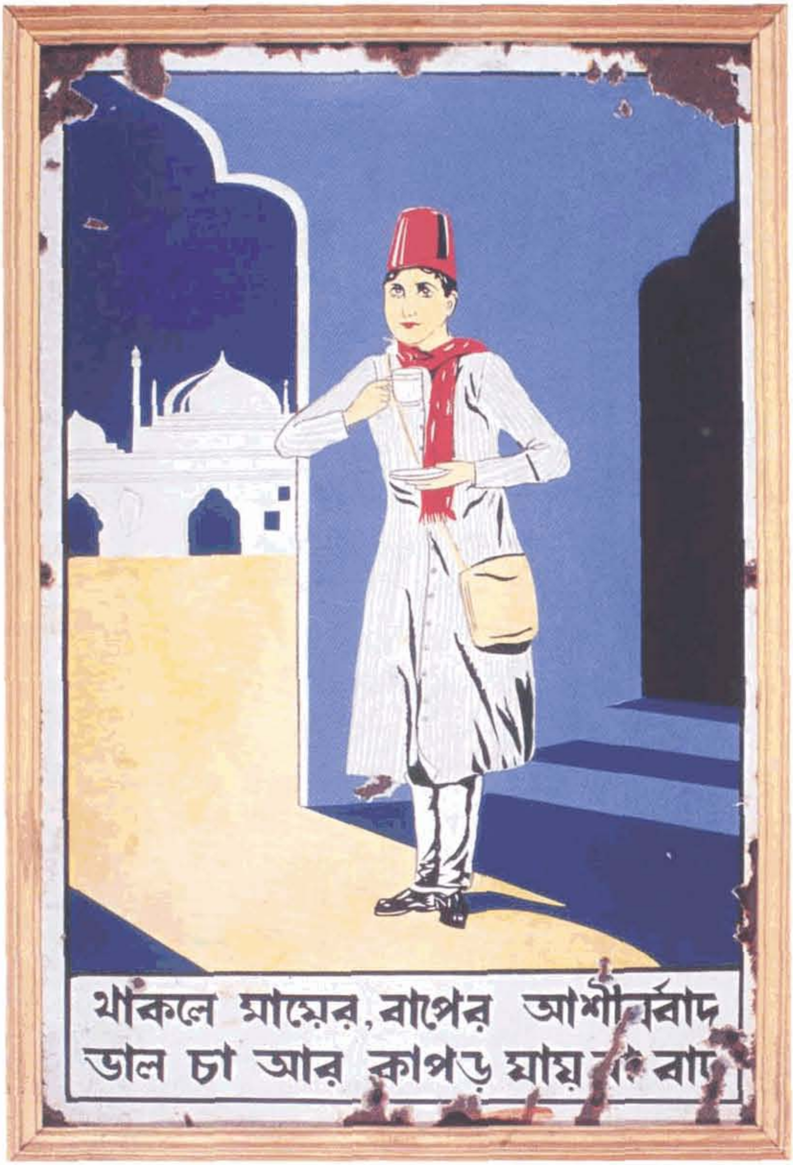


fig.19 A Musliam Raees

An Indian tea drinker may belong to any community. On an enamel board, the client has obviously been depicted as a muslim *raees* (aristocrat) marked by his elegant dress and *fez* [fig.19]. The background architecture also suggests a similar cultural connotation. A well-known proverb has been used as a caption but with a significant replacement, tea being put in the place of the word roti or bread. Coupled with *kapar* or cloth, tea appears to be a necessary daily item instead of a luxury.

The ideal code for tea preparation promulgated by the committee and the board in practice has always been subverted and transmuted. In 1853, one of the earliest vernacular poems praising the quality of tea prescribed drinking the beverage with a pinch of salt. The use of milk and sugar was recommended only occasionally.[23] Common people concocted versions of the brew with every possible ingredient in keeping with their own taste and cultural mores. The procedure prescribed by the tea companies and promotional board would be followed strictly only among some of the members of the upper classes. Around 1910s and the 1920s, in aristocratic families in Bengal, the process of tea making was like the performance of a ceremony for a special occasion. Jatindra Mohan gave a detailed description of a tea service and the elaborate process of making tea. Beautiful tea-cosies made of flannel were always put over a teapot to keep the liquor warm. He also referred to the compulsory use of a sand clock to calculate the exact duration for brewing tea. Milk and sugar in profuse quantities had, however, already been mixed with the brew. In those days, in the eyes of ordinary people, the process of tea making was certainly labeled as a cumbersome one.[24]

In an area named Anjar, at Cutch in Gujarat in 1940s, people were not in the habit of drinking tea. They boiled tea-leaves in water with a sufficient amount of sugar and sheep's milk, and then they would throw away the liquor, and the leaves soaked in sugar, water and milk would be served as delicious snack.[25] In a few areas of North Bengal, tea has been used not as a drink but as a food mixed with *panta bhat* or rice[26] cooked and soaked overnight to get it slightly fermented. Tea with the *tulsi* herb or with a few drops of honey and ginger is used as a perfect *ayurvedic* medicine for cough and cold . A milky liquid with a pinch of tea-leaves, a lump of sugar, or sometimes jaggery if sugar was unavailable, brewed with bay leaves and cardamoms, has been a favourite drink for any occasion in North India. In the early 1930s, Subimal Roy, a non-descript schoolmaster, formulated a taxonomy of tea that would have confounded any tea taster or professional manual writer. Like a real connoisseur, he categorised tea according to the mixture of ingredients used, taste and colour, under a number of ingenious nomenclatures such as *Baishnav bhogya cha*

(Tea suitable for a devotee of Bishnu - harmless, sweet and milky), *Hanuman bhogya cha* (tea favourable for lord Hanuman, strong enough to enable one to jump over a sea) or *Janasadharan bhogya cha* (tea for commoners, indifferent in taste and quality).[27] Tea drinking in India had, by then, taken on the colour, taste and nuances of a culture of its own .

A Drink for the Nation

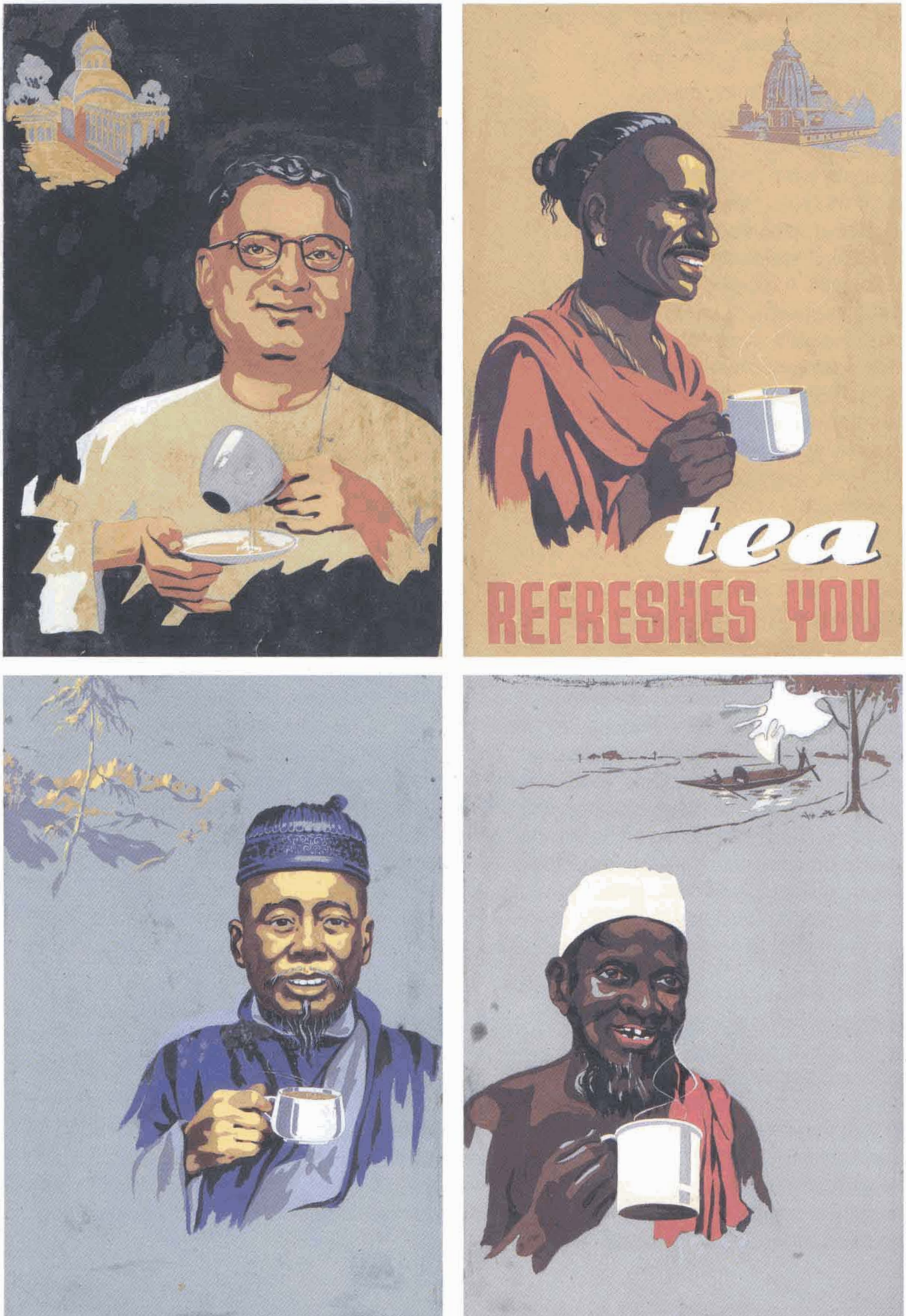
It is therefore clear that tea drinking, like any cultural practice, is fragmentary in nature and uneven in its spread and depth. Ashoka Gupta notes that in Bethune College hostel around the late 20s she used to get tea, bread, milk and eggs for breakfast.[28] Sukumar Sen (1900-1992), the well-known litterateur of Bengal, recalls that he used to drink tea in the morning at his country house in the district of Bardhaman.[29] But, in Calcutta, while staying as a guest in his maternal uncle's house during his student days, he was quite uncomfortable because there was no provision for tea in that family. He had to satisfy his hankering for tea either in his friend's house or in a makeshift tea stall in College Street. He remembered that it was only in the mid 30s that Barua Tea Company opened up a number of teashops in North Calcutta. Gyan Babu's or Radhu Babu's teashops, famous in the 1950s, were successors to the Barua Company. In the first decade of the 20th century, Benaras had a single teashop in *Bangalitola* (the locality of Bengali residents). Premankur Atarthi (1890-1964), the well-known writer and a bohemian par excellence, has also noted that though he had occasionally been invited for tea by some families in Gujarat, he found only one teashop in the city of Agra in the 1920s.[30]

Tea was not a universal drink everywhere and for every class. The habit grew differently according to the distinct caste and class positions of tea drinkers. In Tamilnadu, the urban middle class was enamoured of the 'coffee hotel', while manual workers and rickshaw-pullers frequented teashops. Kanippayyur Sankaran Nambutirippad (1891-1981) from Kerala recalls his early experience of teashops, popularly called 'hotels' or 'coffee clubs', in Malabar. From the road one could see the table where tea was being made, along with a row of glass tumblers placed upside down. Water boiled next to it, and tea was made in a small glass tumbler, with milk and sugar, stirring it noisily with a teaspoon and vigorously pouring it from one tumbler to another to cool it. All these were signs of non-Brahmin 'coffee clubs'. In Brahmin hotels, however low-class, things were different. Glass fronted cupboards with snacks were placed inside the room; one needed to enter the teashop to see them. Tea and coffee was also made indoors, invisible to travellers on the road.[31]
In rural Bengal, the situation was different. Bibhuti Bhusan Bandyopadhyay (1894-1950) has described tea, even in the late 30s, as a luxurious and fanciful drink for the poor peasants. In his inimitable style and exquisite language, the great novelist has depicted a scene from an obscure village fair where a woman from a family of poor and untouchable peasants is holding a *bhar* (earthen pot) of tea and cajoling her reluctant child to drink it saying,

Gulp it, it is nothing, it is simply tea. Don't make a fuss-give it a try-very sweet, - quite a good medicine for fever. Damn it (a molo ja), don't you understand that I have bought it only for you for four dimes? Shall I have to throw it away? How can I drink it now? I have already drunk two bhars of tea- drink you must![32]

By the early 1940s it was clear that the days of the Raj were numbered and independence was not far off. Prabhu Guha Thakurta, an expert in ITMEB, changed the orientation of promotional images of tea, suitable to the changed socio-political milieu. In order to be a national emblem, tea had to posit itself as a drink for all members of an 'imagined community', which subsumes and synchronises differences under the general and well-conceived arch of a nation.[33]

Operating on a register of different races and regional cultures already enumerated in the colonial census, tea in a number of images appears as a drink for a specific stereotypical racial figure depicted against the background of a landscape or architecture, signifying the cultural location of the tea drinker [figs 20 and 23]. Through this particular procedure of representation, tea posits itself as an essential link between different cultural zones in the subcontinent.



figs. 20, 21
22, 23
Races of India

fig.24 100% Swadeshi



A number of talented artists and designers who in the 40s had already made an innovative move in advertisements found new avenues of expression for this campaign organised by ITMEB. In a masterly poster, Annada Munshi (1905-1985), one of the pioneers of new commercial-art design in India, erased the approbation of imperial association with tea. As a replacement for a number of imperial insignia, he put the spinning wheel as an emblem on the poster [fig. 24]. With a single stroke, tea was positioned within the idioms of Gandhian self-reliance and the nationalist movement.

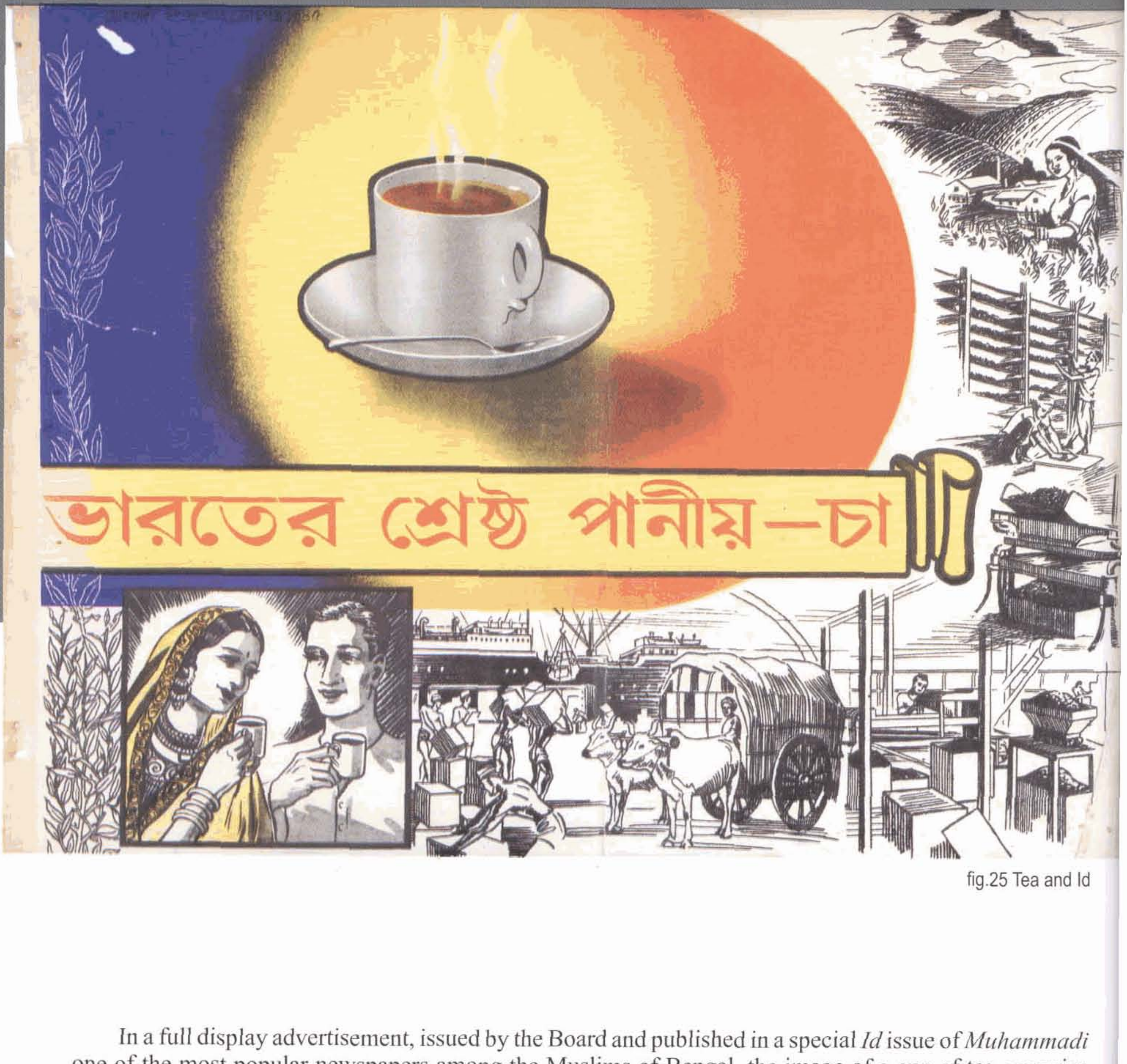
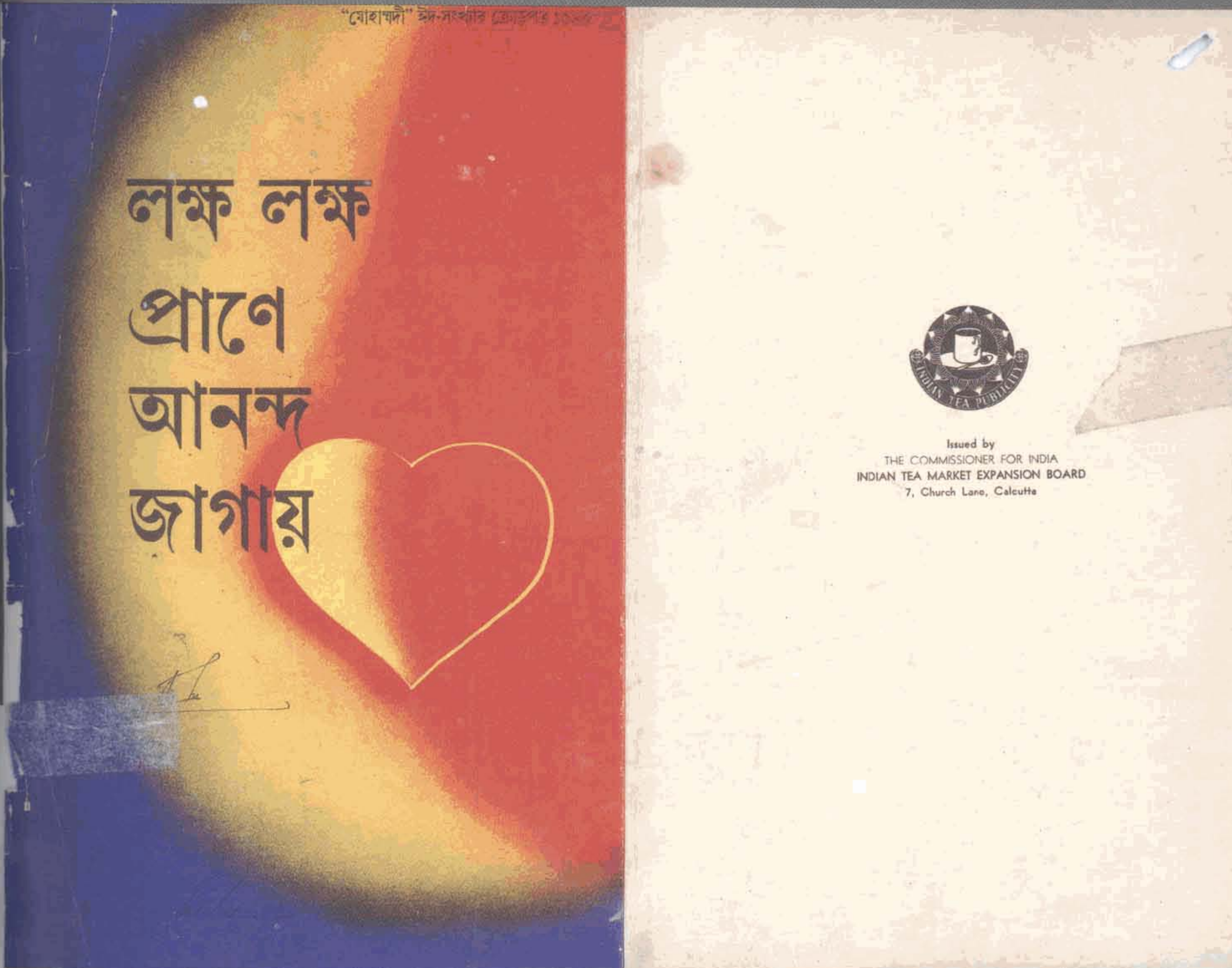


fig.25 Tea and Id

In a full display advertisement, issued by the Board and published in a special *Id* issue of *Muhammadi* one of the most popular newspapers among the Muslims of Bengal, the image of a cup of tea occupies centre stage [fig.25]. The poster has been divided into two parts. On the right side and bottom of the poster, there are illustrations depicting numerous activities indicating the involvement of people in various stages of tea production and trade. These have been arranged like a narrative sequence with an inevitable conclusion. An inset shows a couple sipping tea, underlining the finality of the act. Spatially the image of the cup occupies half the poster. The act of drinking tea, it has been suggested, is not at all trivial. Signifying an end-product in a chain of activities, the cup of tea, as it were, compresses and absorbs within it the labour of numerous persons unknown to the consumer.



The illustration has been spatially arranged from the right to the left following the tradition of Perso-Arabic script, a departure from the usual narrative placement. Outlined in black, the cup stands out distinctively within a circle of colour in bright hues. This visual contrast and placement of illustrations hints at a sense of multiplicity behind the singular act of drinking tea. A feeling for the nation inheres in this kind of sensibility. On the reverse left side, through a splash of colour, and a symbol of the heart as well as a crescent moon of *Id* and an appropriate slogan, the poster captures the resonance of delight emanating from a major festival for Muslims. Tea, attaching itself to the festival, signifies mass sociability. Without any direct pronouncement, the totality of this display fuses economic and cultural messages for the consumer. A cup of tea does not merely signify personal enjoyment. It implies a social and national responsibility.

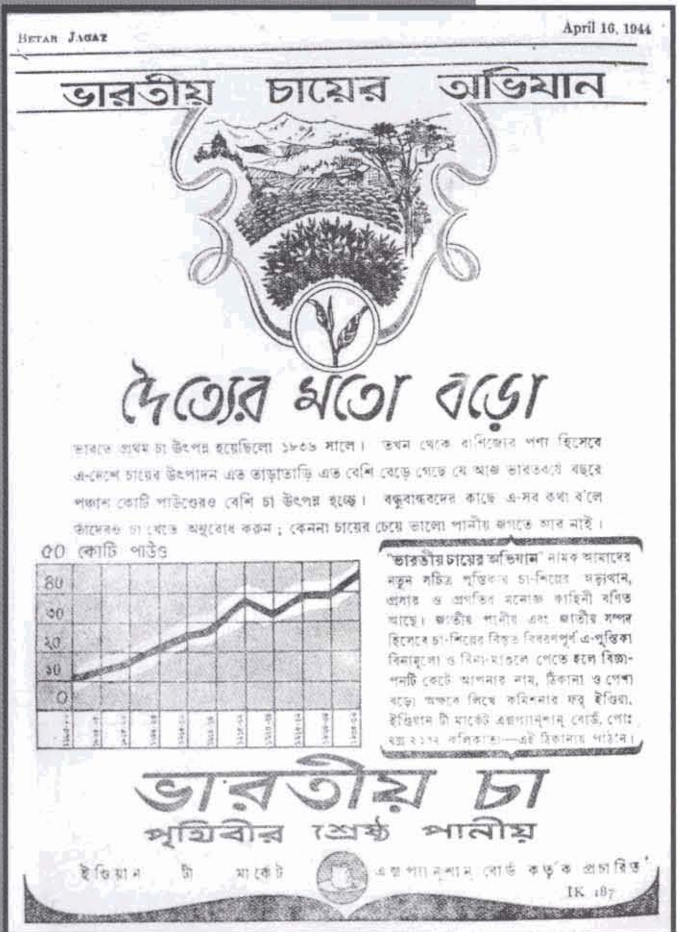
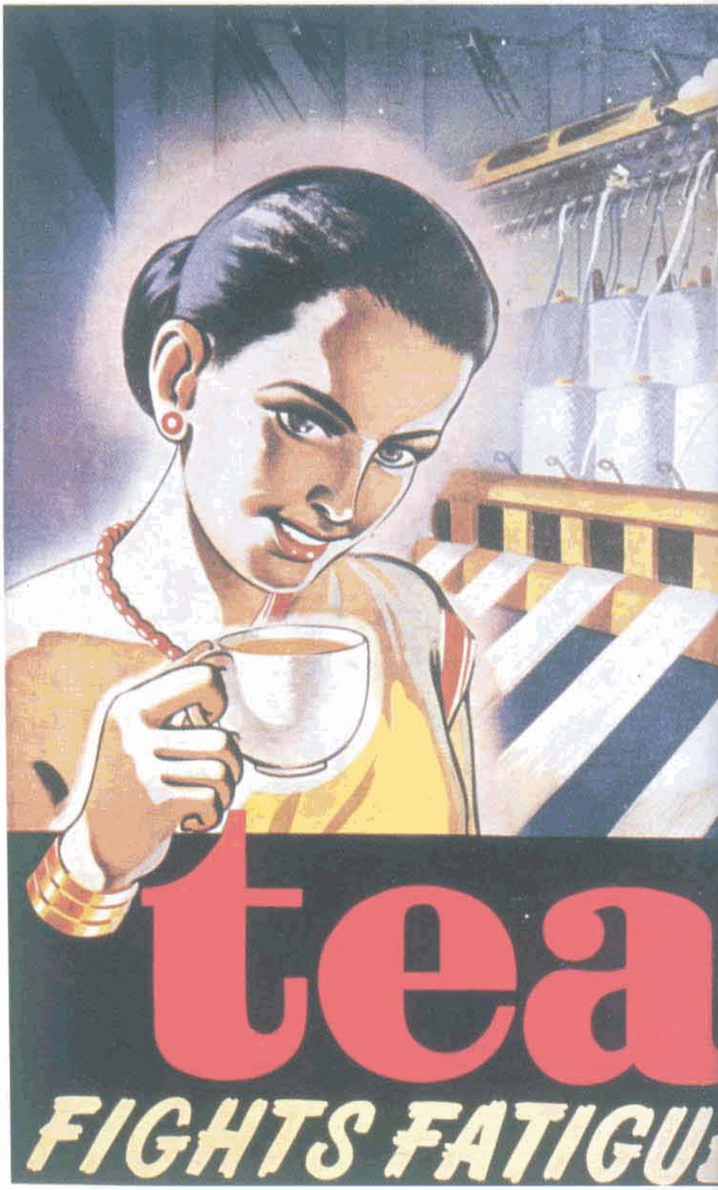


fig.26 As Big as a Giant

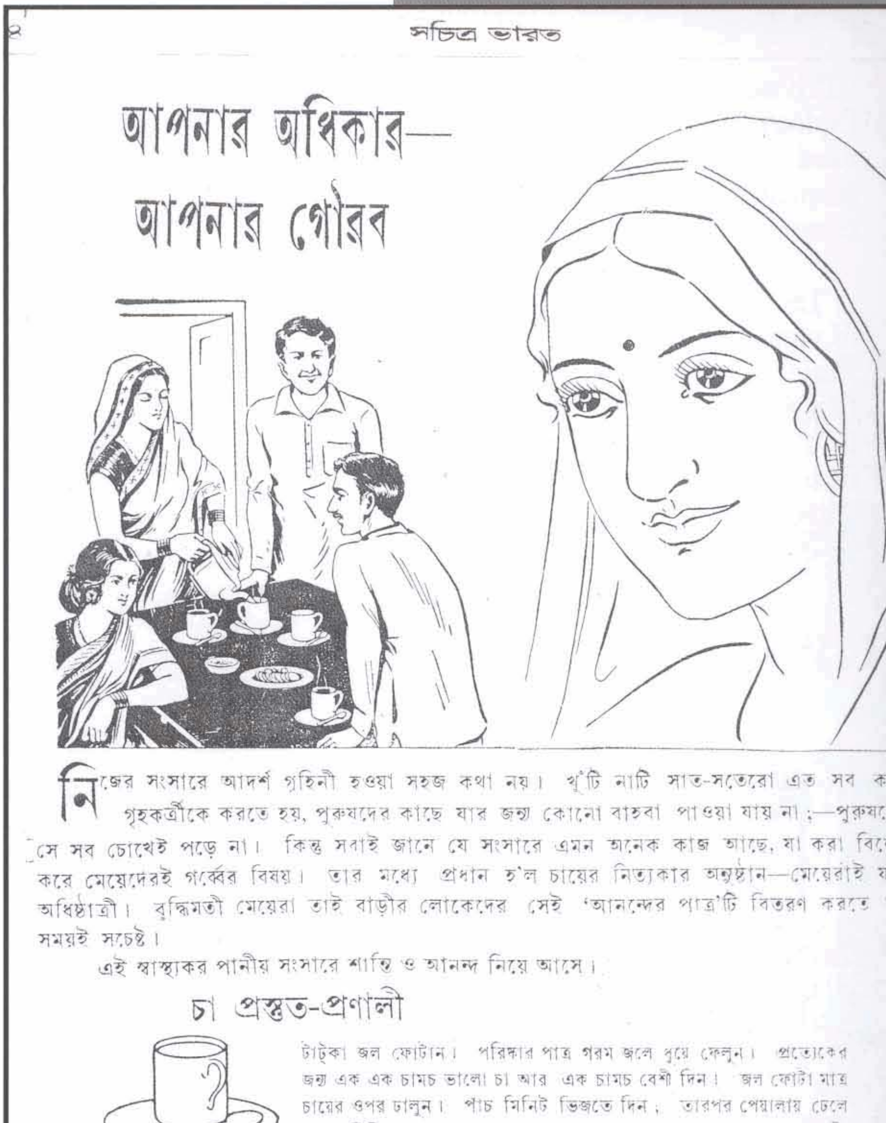
fig.27 Tea Fights Fatigue



Another newspaper advertisement issued by the Board designates tea as a giant, a source of national wealth for India [fig.26]. Here, a graph based on annual statistics shows a rising trend in the production of tea over a long time. As a message this indication is important. It assures us of the accuracy of information. The number game is seen as essential for making tea a signpost in the emerging economic landscape of the nation.

In another colour poster, Annada Munshi drew a woman labourer sipping tea, while taking a break against the background of a moving power-loom in a textile mill [fig.27]. In the 1940s, ITMEB tried to persuade the owners of the mills to open 'cheap canteens' for the workers and to distribute tea at a subsidized rate. The campaign was particularly vigorous in Western and Southern India. Around this time, Annada Munshi, associated with a newspaper concern of Bombay, designed the simple but brilliant poster. Thus, around the practice of tea drinking in industrial establishments the poster signifies a fusion of work and leisure that pervades the composition. Could there be a more eloquent symbol than this for the economic development of the nation?

fig.28 Tea and Your Rights



A nation can not be conceived of without the family as its necessary foundation. Tea could hardly ignore this vital space for its self-projection. In this advertisement [fig. 28], the copywriter has underscored a crucial phrase *Dash Janer Sansar* (literally, a family of ten) indicating a joint family where the preferences of each member may differ; yet the members live together under a single roof, resolving their differences through negotiation. A nation may easily be conceived in terms of the metaphor of the family with its emphasis on love and lineage instead of prosaic duty and beneficial law. In this advertisement, the copy and the composition merge, pointing to the figure of a house-wife standing prominently as the sustainer of the family, proud of performing family duties as her right and privilege: tea making for everybody in a joint family seems to be a noble task. The figure of the busy and confident housewife encapsulates within itself the idea of the nation as mother. A slogan for family values has muted the gender bias. Tea signifies a crucial braiding of the family and the nation.

Private companies also changed their strategies. Lipton's Tea, veering from their earlier tradition, used floral decorative designs meant for auspicious occasions as a motif for greeting customers during the autumn festival [fig.29].

The Valley-View Company narrated the stories of various seasonal festivals such as *Dashahara*, *Jhulan* and *Diwali* [fig.30]. Tea has no ritual function in any of these festivals; in this narrative, it is present merely as a drink of conviviality, investing a sacred occasion with a space for social interaction.

fig.29Tea and Festival II

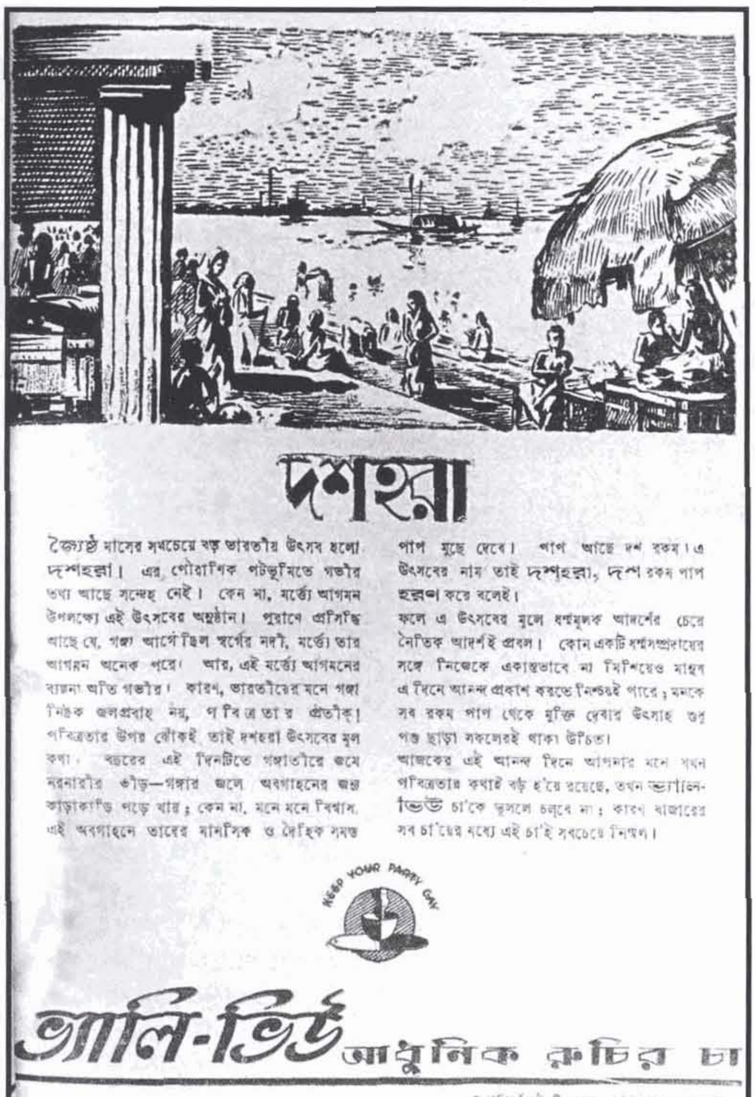
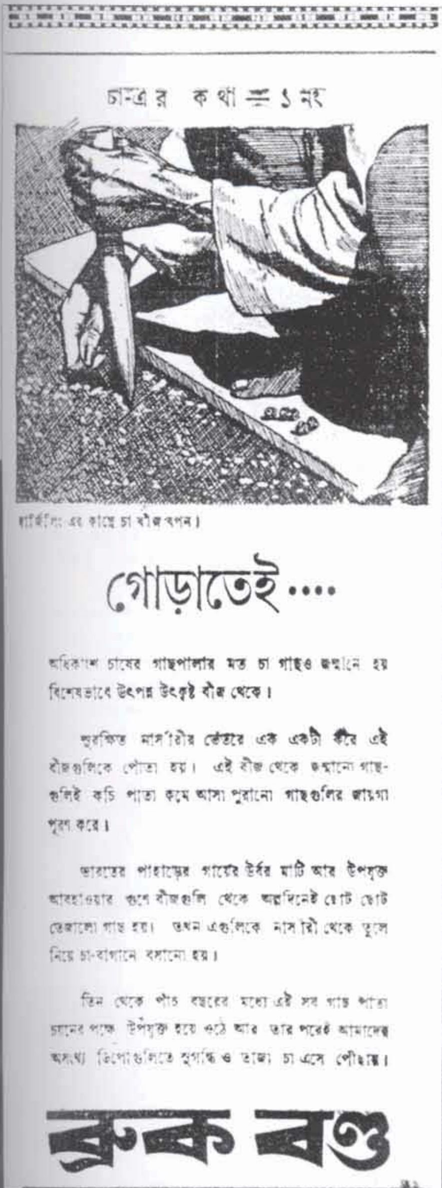




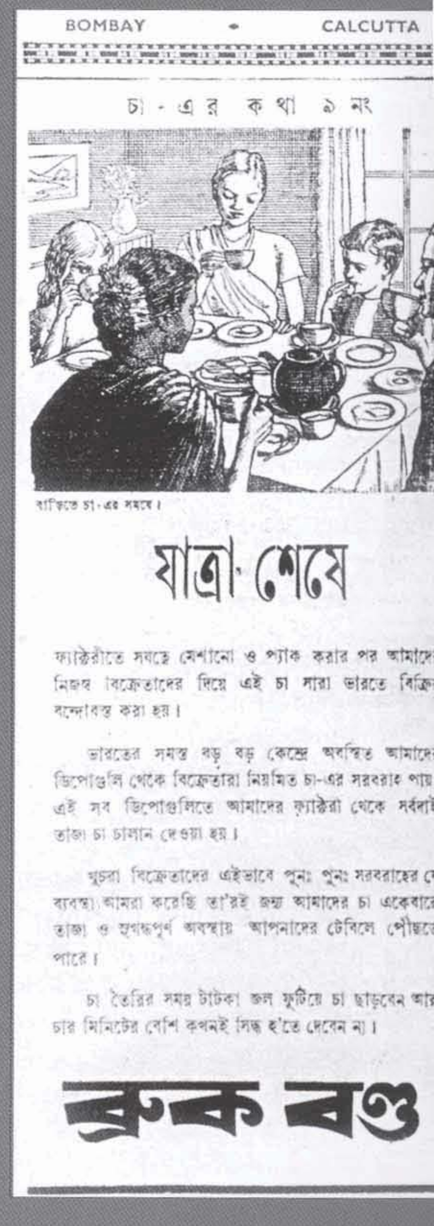
fig. 30 Puja Greetings

Brooke Bond, the competitor of Lipton, launched another series of advertisements telling the familiar story of tea, its journey from the plantation to the breakfast table [figs.31-33]. As a mode of advertisement, any written narrative serial presupposes a degree of literacy among the consumers, thus specifying their cultural attainment. As a story, it sustains the reader's curiosity as it is published in instalments. The sequences are arranged thematically and historically; they represent the consumption of a particular product as perfectly rational and voluntary. Consumption has the charm and prestige of tradition and the necessity of social forces.





figs. 31, 32, 33 The Journey of Tea (1, 6, 9)



A few days before the declaration of Independence, ITMEB, in an advertisement projected the product with a new connotation [fig.34]. This advertisement primarily depends on a lengthy copy for communication. It follows the pattern of a public notice, though the linguistic format differs. Interestingly, this printed manifesto is full of the rhetoric of a search for unity in diversity. In this contextual association, tea has been named as a true ambassador of the nation. The message is intended both for the domestic and the foreign market. In one register, it is an appeal to domestic consumers reminding them of an important public principle. At another level, it infuses the product with a new political meaning and anticipates the public posturing of incipient Nehruvian foreign policy. The old imperial order is no more. Tea as a product, in its self-representation, has undergone a metamorphosis, as it were, from an old imperial insignia to a symbol of the new nation.

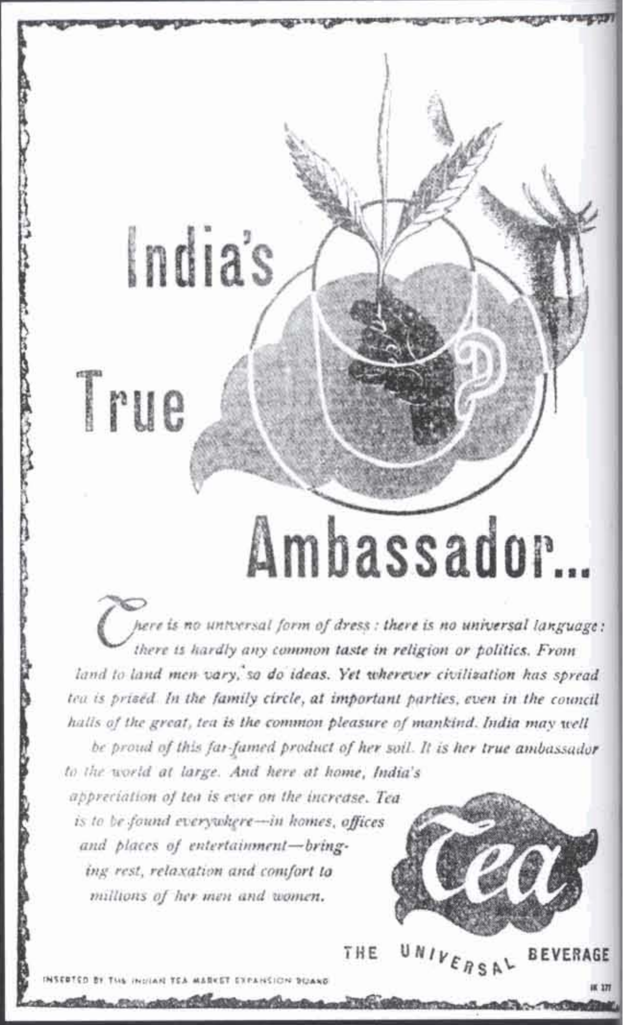


fig.34 Tea as an Ambassador

Armed with these arsenals, around 1950s, Central Tea Board (CTB), the successor to ITMEB, had reason to be confident. Tea, as a son of the soil had found its place under the sun. It was no longer confined to the drawing rooms of the elites. It had become the favorite beverage of the masses in the subcontinent. The photograph of a tea propaganda van on the road proudly captures this moment of transformation in its history [fig.35].

fig.35 Tea on Road

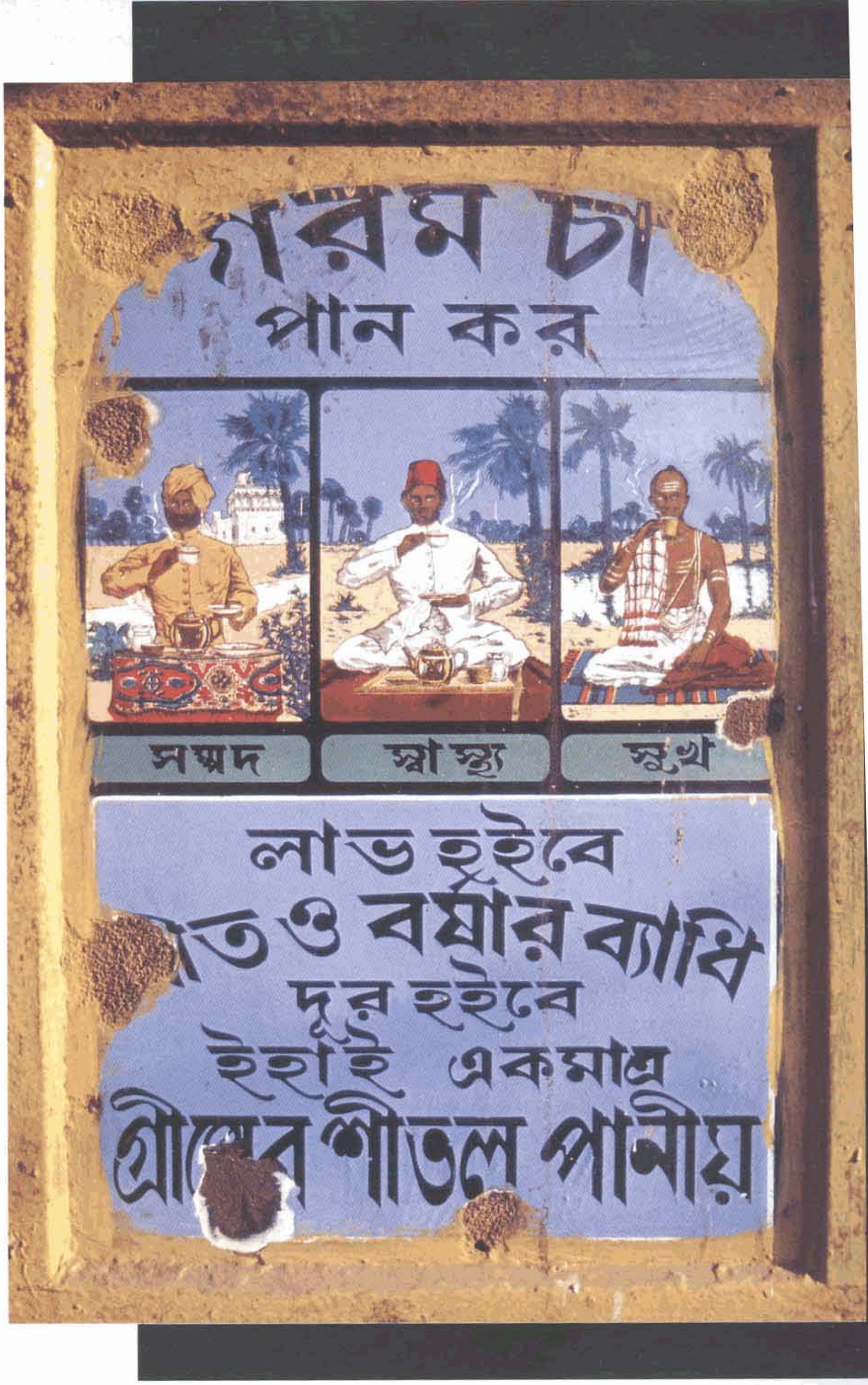


The Nation and its Aesthetics: Images of Desire

Desire is a problematic term, elusive and complex, possessing various meanings in different disciplines. In the context of our analysis, desire simply means a craving for something or somebody. The particular object of desire may be real or imagined. The desirous subject has to be embedded in a surrounding. It must acknowledge its own mental or material mooring. This acknowledgement has asserted through the shape of a visual or literary image, prone to expand or contract according to the social situation, political demand or individual preference.

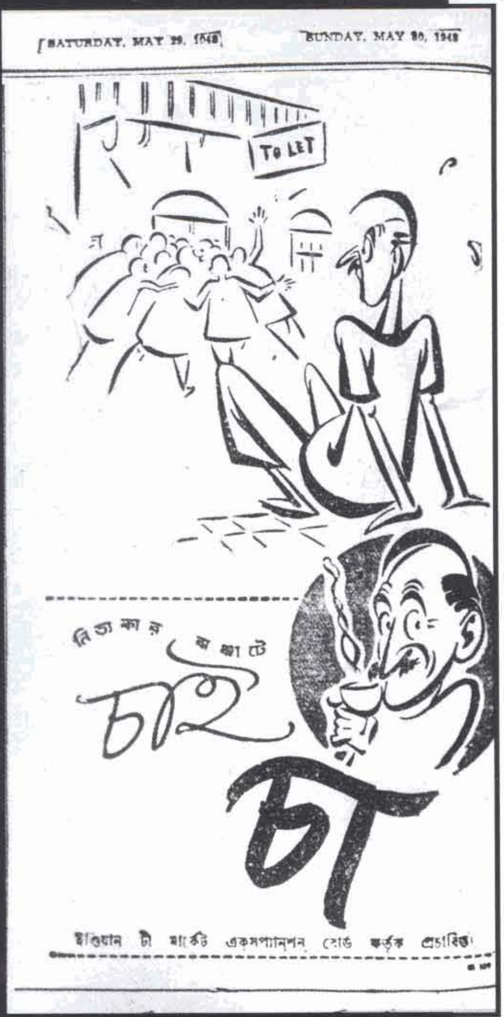
The colourful enamelled tin sign, first produced around the early 1920s and touched up repeatedly, is still on display at Ballygunj Railway Station, South

fig.36 Wealth, Health and Happiness



Calcutta [fig.36]. One may find its variants in Dumdum, Naihati, Santipur, Ranaghat, Bongaon and Barasat stations adjacent to Kolkata. It is evident that the Tea Cess Committee displayed a number of hoardings at junction stations for general commuters. The billboard looks like a panel divided into four parts. In the extreme right of the panel, three figures, a Sikh, a Muslim and a Brahmin are visible. Each one of them is relishing a cup of tea squatting on the ground. They bear well-known marks of their communities and religions such as the turban, sacred thread and fez. Each figure has a respective caption: wealth, health and happiness. At the bottom, the usual formulaic slogans in praise of tea as a beverage have been painted.

In this apparently unambiguous display, each subject of desire has taken the shape of a corporeal image, signifying a community. This move transforms the figures into iconic images. These associations are arbitrary, having no historical or cultural specificity. Any consumer can long for wealth, health and happiness. The assurance is that he can fulfil his desire simply by drinking a cup of tea. Iconic signifiers produce this suggestion through the invocation of communities, each having a supposed essential virtue.

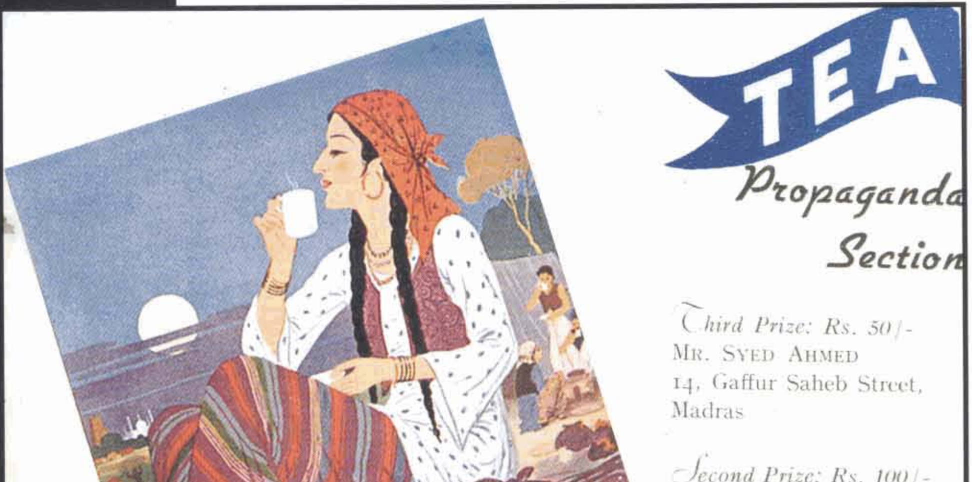


A series of cartoons issued by ITMEB in the year 1947 underline the principle of grounding. Each of them depicts a specific situation in which the consumer has been caught unaware. The top half of the picture [fig.37] shows a number of people running towards a house with a 'To Let' sign. They have left one hapless person behind. In the lower half, that person is shown drinking a cup of tea for relief. Intended to advertise tea as succour in trying conditions, the cartoon projects the figure of the customer as an ordinary person of the lower middle class who survives the tough times punctuated by war, partition, riots and ration. As an emblem of the ordinary man living in the city, this stereotypical figure appears again and again in advertisements either for tea or for cigarettes. It is reconfigured in the hilarious drawings of Prafulla Chandra Lahiri (1900-1975) and has been immortalized by *Birupaksha* or Birendra Krishna Bhadra (1905-1991) in a radio serial. This recurrence underscores the cultural environment in which tea as a drink is firmly rooted.

In 1940s, the advertisement as a visual genre could hardly remain unresponsive to new experiments and movements in the contemporary art world of India. In 1940, the birth of

fig.37 Tea as Solace III

fig.38 "Anytime Anywhere"



'Art in Industry', patronized by a few Industrial houses like Burmah Shell and Dunlop and art collectors and artists like Bhabanicharan Laha (1880-1946 B.S.) marked this new concern. Its aims were 'to serve as a link between artists and industries' and 'to raise the standard of commercial art'. A few advertising agencies like D. J. Keymer & Co. and L.A. Stronach & Co. encouraged experiments in the realm of commercial art by appointing Annada Munshi and Orun Coomar Gangoly (1919-1996) as paid artists.[34]

ITMEB was quite sensitive to the opportunity opened up by the experiments in commercial art. For the 'commercial artists' the Board announced a competition organized by Art in industry. The prizes were quite lucrative. Rs. 1000 as first prize and Rs. 500 each for two second prizes. The themes around which designs were invited were: (a) Tea - Universal Beverage, (b) Tea - 100 % Swadeshi, (c) Tea - The Most Refreshing Beverage, and (d) Tea The Cheapest Beverage. Annada Munshi and Makhan Dutta Gupta (1914-1988) were forerunners in the competition.[35]

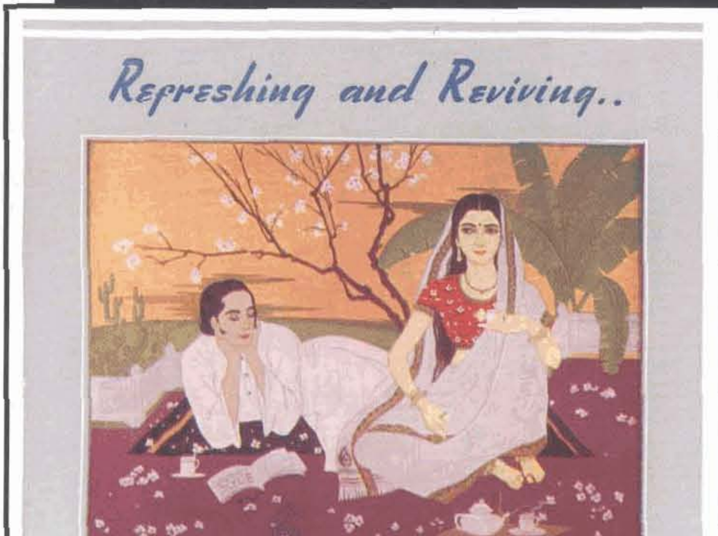


fig.39 Idyllic Tea

Two prize-winning promotional pictures of tea displayed in the Annual Exhibition (1942), organised by 'Art in Industry' clearly reflect a new orientation in commercial art. The calendar designed by Subal Paul shows numerous figures, big and small, arranged spatially [fig.38]. The dominant figure is that of a woman with baggage, drinking tea during a journey. The style and framing follows the pattern of a Mughal miniature. This leads to an illusory effect transposing the practice of tea drinking into the Mughal period. Figurative details, however, are contemporary. The charm of this picture lies in this simple contrast. More interestingly, this calendar presents a group of *musafirs* or travellers on the road, the figure of a tent being noticeable in the background. In the extreme left, a *gopuram* and a structure similar to the *Tajmahal* stand side by side, indicating the message of a composite culture. In the political context of the early 1940s, this artistic reconstruction goes beyond the pragmatic purpose of promoting tea as a drink.

The propaganda poster drawn by Bhagwandas Ganguli is subtle and suggestive [fig.39]. The composition does not emphatically show tea as an essential drink. The ambience of this picture is soft and peaceful. A couple sits against a landscape of blooming nature. The whole mood is one of relaxation, serenity and tranquility. The reclining position of the male figure and the placid facial expression of the woman heighten the effect of calm and composure. The book and the tea together suggest an emotive bond between them, as if they are savouring the happiness of their life together. The picture seems to be a sensitive reworking of

Purnachandra Chakrabarty's (1903-1989) famous illustration for Narendra Dev's translation of a verse written by Omar Khayyam. The figures of a damsel, a book and a cup of wine in the illustration by Purna Chakrabarty have been reworked into those of wife, book and cup of tea. The images of a cactus, a cherry blossom and a banana plant placed along side transforms the landscape into vistas of number of places suggesting desert areas, Japan and Bengal. It is a mixture of multiple cultural significations. A sense of repose and leisure is, however, common both to the illustration and the picture. The translations of Omar Khayyam's verse were very popular in those days,[36] and when tea as a product was placed in that associative context its appeal transformed the viewers into potential customers. Tea is just a constituent part, pervading an act of enjoyment: no additional signification was necessary.

The explanatory categories of visual culture in India tend to be primarily literary in character. Even during the early 1950s, CTB clung to this notion. A number of advertisements were conceived around the theme of *rituranga* (a cluster of songs in praise of the seasons), a genre created and popularized by Rabindranath Thakur (1861-1941). In one such composition, a poem by Rabindranath on early winter, reproduced in his own hand-writing, has been used [fig.40]. The accompanying drawing merely illustrates the poem. Here, the graphic image is completely dependent on the power of literary language to evoke the mood inherent in a vision of nature. Tea as commodity occurs nowhere except in the caption. The advertisement might as well have been used for any similar consumer good catering to the sensibilities and needs of Bengali-speaking people.

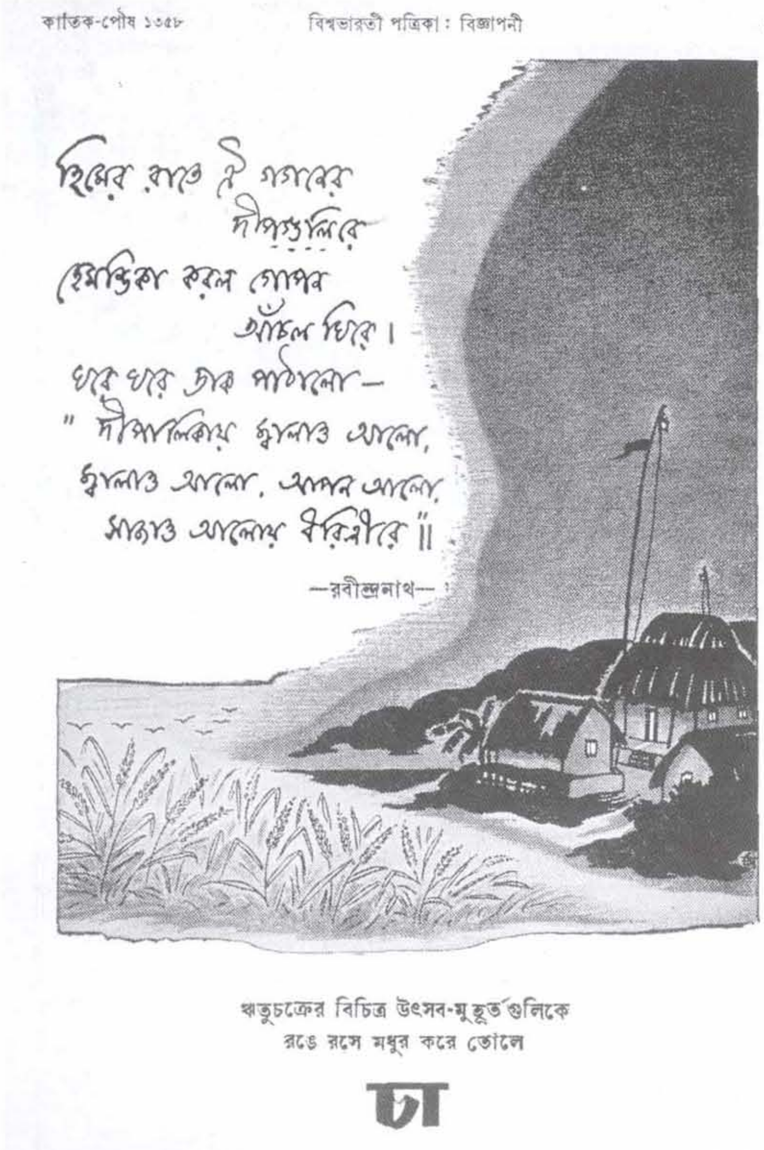


fig. 40 Tea and the Seasons III

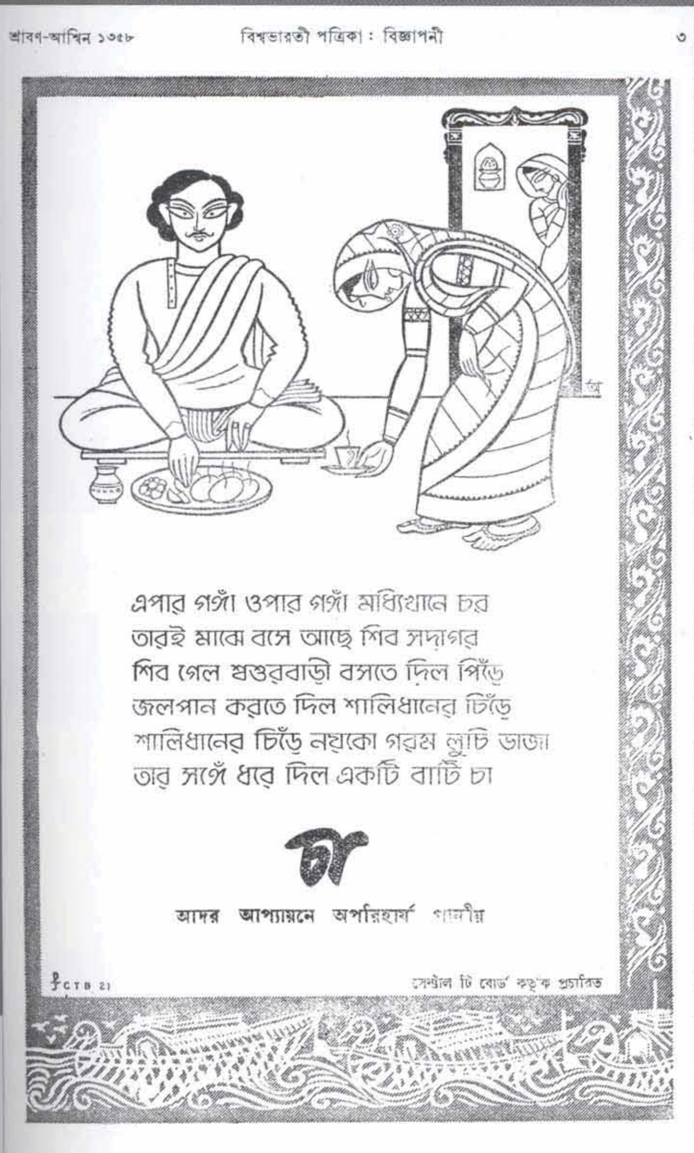
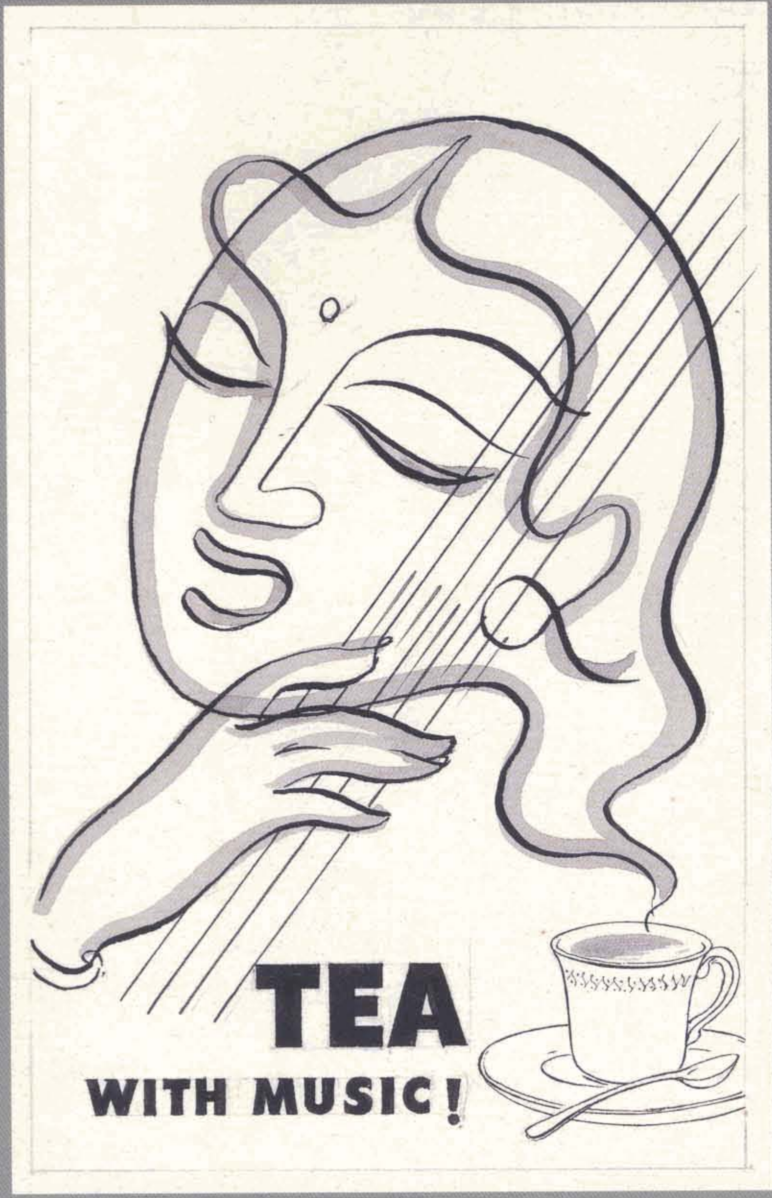


fig.41 Tea and Folk Rhymes II

The advertisement as an artwork thrives and develops around this tension and through negotiation between visual and literary representations. In the three decades following the 1940s, Annada Munshi, Makhan Dutta Gupta, Satyajit Ray (1921-1992), O. C. Gangoly, Ranen Ayan Dutt and Raghunath Goswami (1931-1995) had taken up the challenge to resolve this tension. Khaled Chaudhury (b.1919), a completely self-taught artist, also contributed to this search for a new language for commercial art.

To an artist like Annada Munshi, who was the art director of D. J. Keymer and Co., *Rabindra Sangeet* was not the only literary source fit for use as copy for a creative composition. Drawing on one of the vast repository of nursery rhymes, Annada Munshi produced a beautiful thematic picture [fig.41]. This graphic composition is a blend of folk verse with *pat* designs, and the word 'tea' has been surreptitiously placed in the lines of poetry without any jarring consequence. The combination of the literary and the visual is sophisticated enough to invest the drawing with an integrative effect. Tea, as a beverage, has been transformed into a vehicle of affectiveness, with the folk message being delightfully reconstructed for urban viewers.





figs. 42, 43 Moments of Creation V, VI

In a number of drawings attributed to Annada Munshi intended for advertisements, but never published, the artist has placed tea in a web of creative ecstasies [figs.42-44]. Tea, here, no doubt, acts as a stimulant. But, the emphasis is clearly on the release of the creative urge. The facial expression of each figure suggests intense immersion in the act of creation. The aesthetic drive clearly goes beyond the logic of the market or the imperatives of the nation state.

An artist junior to Annada Munshi, Orun Coomar Gangoly has pursued a different artistic tradition. In a design meant for Lipton's Ltd., his preference for western motifs is clearly evident. Blending crisscrossed and curved lines, he has drawn an image of all-pervasive harmony [fig.45]. Within the figure of the instrument, he places the picture of a master conductor, whose presence has been spatially balanced with the cups of tea on the other side. A few musical notes have been used to strengthen the effect of symphony as a performance. It appears thus that harmony is the key principle of aesthetic perfection.

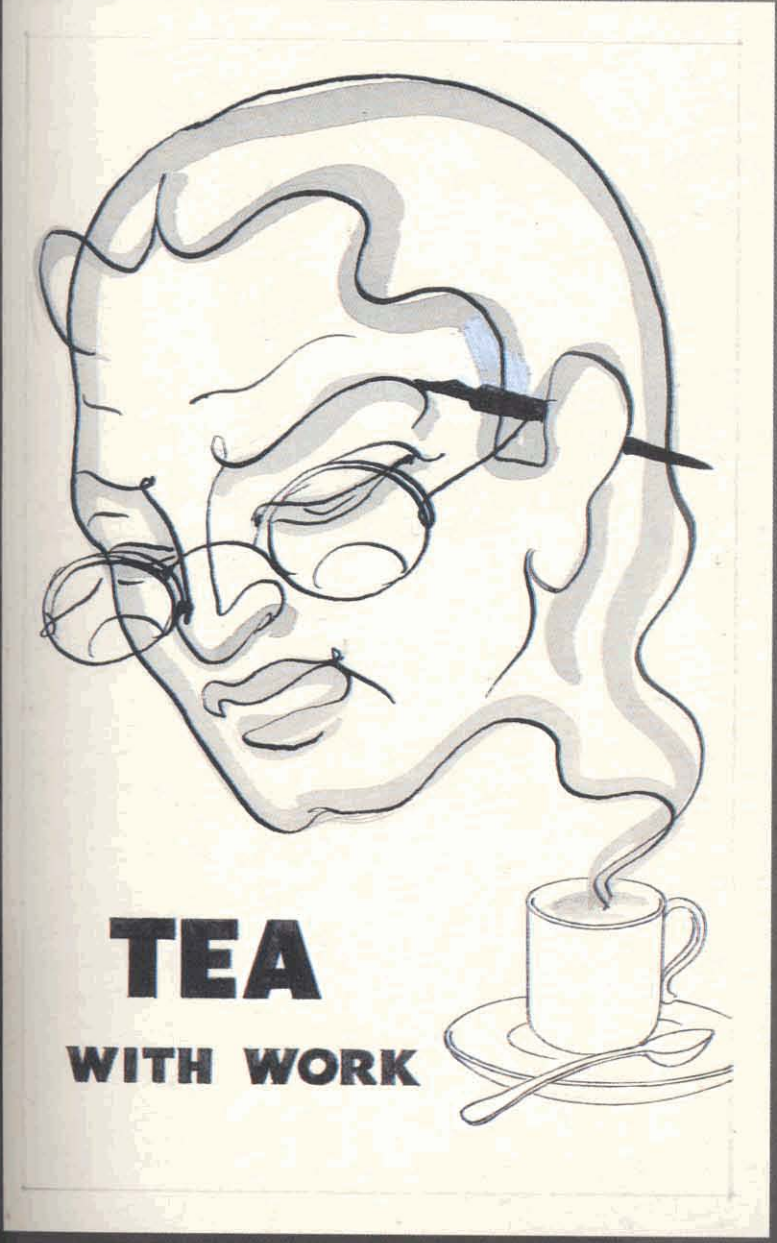


fig. 44 Moments of Creation IV

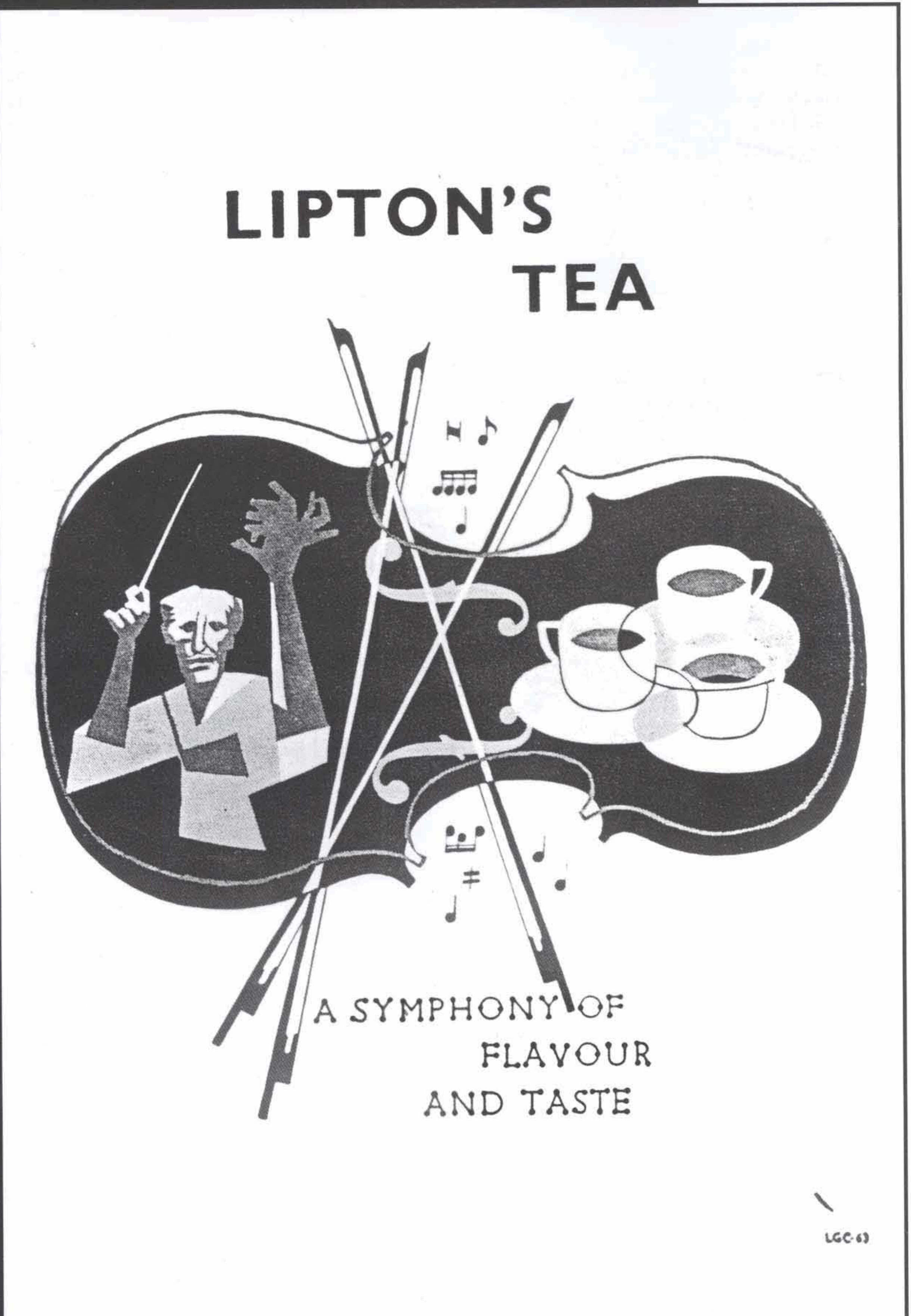


fig. 45 Symphony

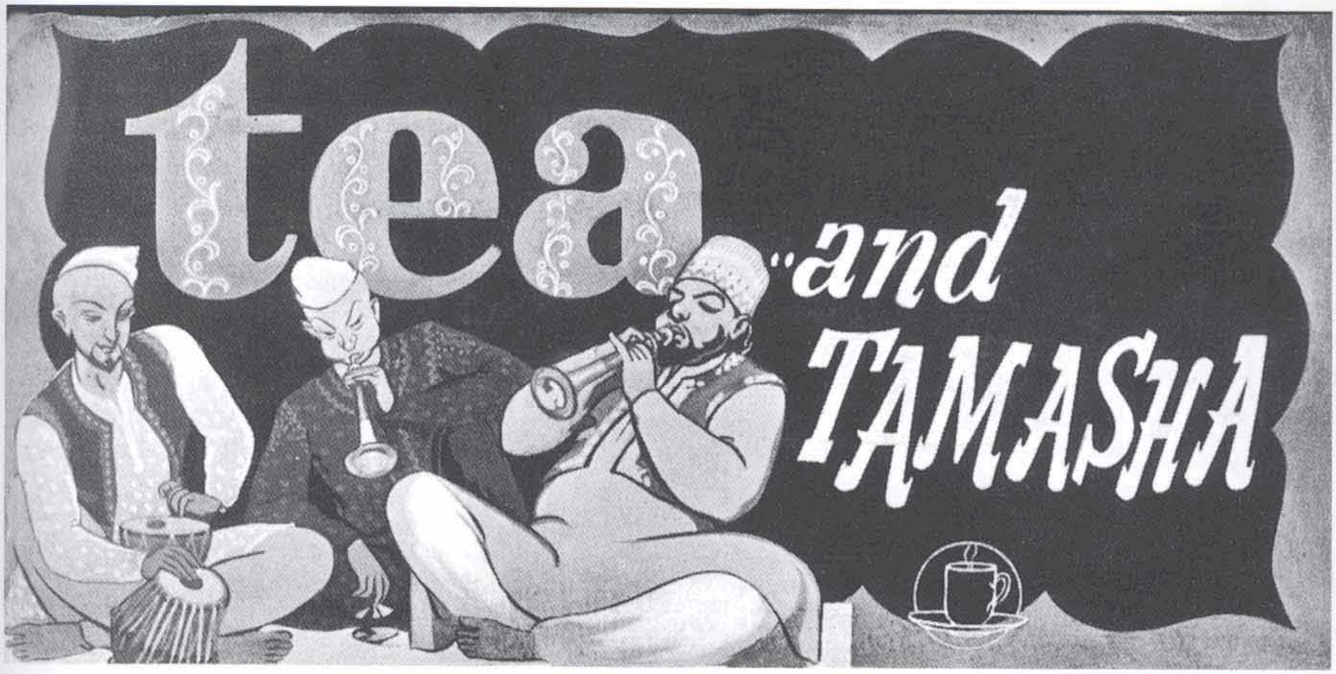


fig.46 Tamasha

A judicious balance between taste and flavour, the visual and the literary, and sound and meaning may lead to a singular moment of artistic enjoyment.

In a hoarding commissioned by ITMEB, Makhan Dutta Gupta may well argue that symphony has a similar counterpart in Indian music. *Tamasha* or a musical performance (a variation of *rasun-chauki*) with *sehnais*, *tabla* and *kartal*, would produce a perfect harmony with a note of lightness and cheer. With bold strokes, he has drawn the facial muscles and postures of the body of the performers in an expressionist style, distinct from the somewhat cubist style of O.C. Gangoly. He establishes the uniqueness of harmony in the Indian tradition [fig.46]. The field of advertisements for tea by then has become a playground of contesting artistic styles and perceptions.

Artists doing modern advertisements since 1940s have composed in a manner where objects and images have been treated as 'compressed performances'.[37] According to this notion, in order to be effective, images need to be affective. In the visual field, the dictum of 'two-plus-two-makes-four' correspondence between representation and meaning does not work beyond simple pragmatism. The communicative power of the visual advertisement as art lies in the excess beyond a simple correlation between the perspectives of the artist and that of the spectator. The customer as a subject and product as an object and vice versa continually intersect and confront each other in the visual field of advertisement. Through this interaction there is always a possibility of generating creative excess.



fig. 47 The Housewive's Companion

fig.48 Tea for Household



'CAMERA LUCIDA'
Focus on moods and moments

In the period between the two World Wars, photography was popularly recognized, among all the visual images, as the most reliable and immediate witness, which could offer direct and 'natural' access to reality. As Roland Barthes muses, the photograph is "the absolute Particular, sovereign Contingency."[38] Being indifferent to all the intermediaries, a photograph is "authentication itself." Advertising would naturally use the immense potential of this powerful medium for market promotion.

In India, in the two decades following independence, government projects and industrial houses utilized the services of Ahmed Ali, a pioneer in commercial photography. One of his photographs on the promotion of tea-drinking focuses on the face of a housewife as if she personifies contentment [fig.47]. Another presents a prosperous happy family in the sitting room, enjoying a tea-drinking session [fig.48]. The message is direct and simple. The event may itself be fabricated, models may be asked to pose before camera. But the situation itself as it is captured by the camera can not be doubted.

A different angle may contest the placement of the focus, if not its certainty. Any photographer roaming a big city street may zoom in on a wayside tea vendor or the wrinkled face of a woman sipping tea [figs.49 and 50]. Ahmed Ali's camera captures image of this kind, but the mood varies according to the composition, the focus, the angle and the 'different' kinds of reality perceived by different photographers.

Both categories of photographs provide information, truthful and reliable. Both of them fix an appearance torn from the immediate context of the past and the future.[39] Here lies the strength and weakness of photography as an art form and a source of promotion. The capacity of a photograph to authenticate exceeds ability to represent. It is a referent in itself.

fig. 49 Tea Vendor

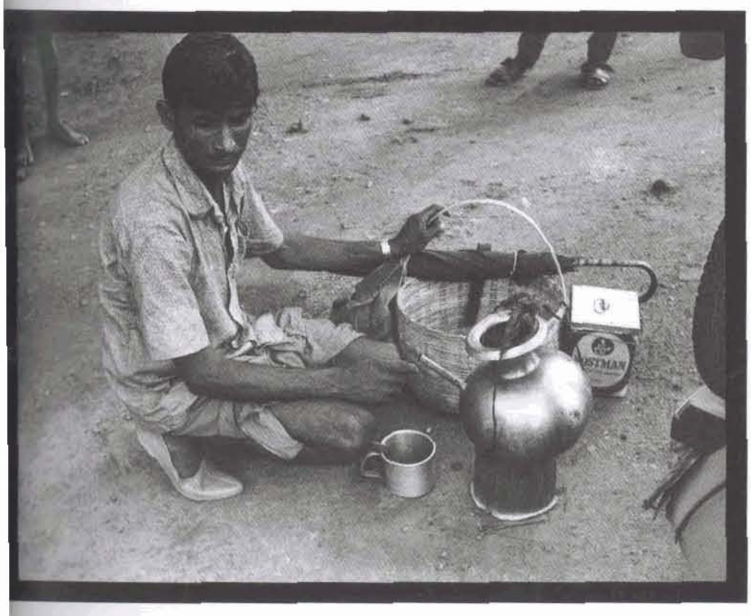


fig.50 Tea on the Streets



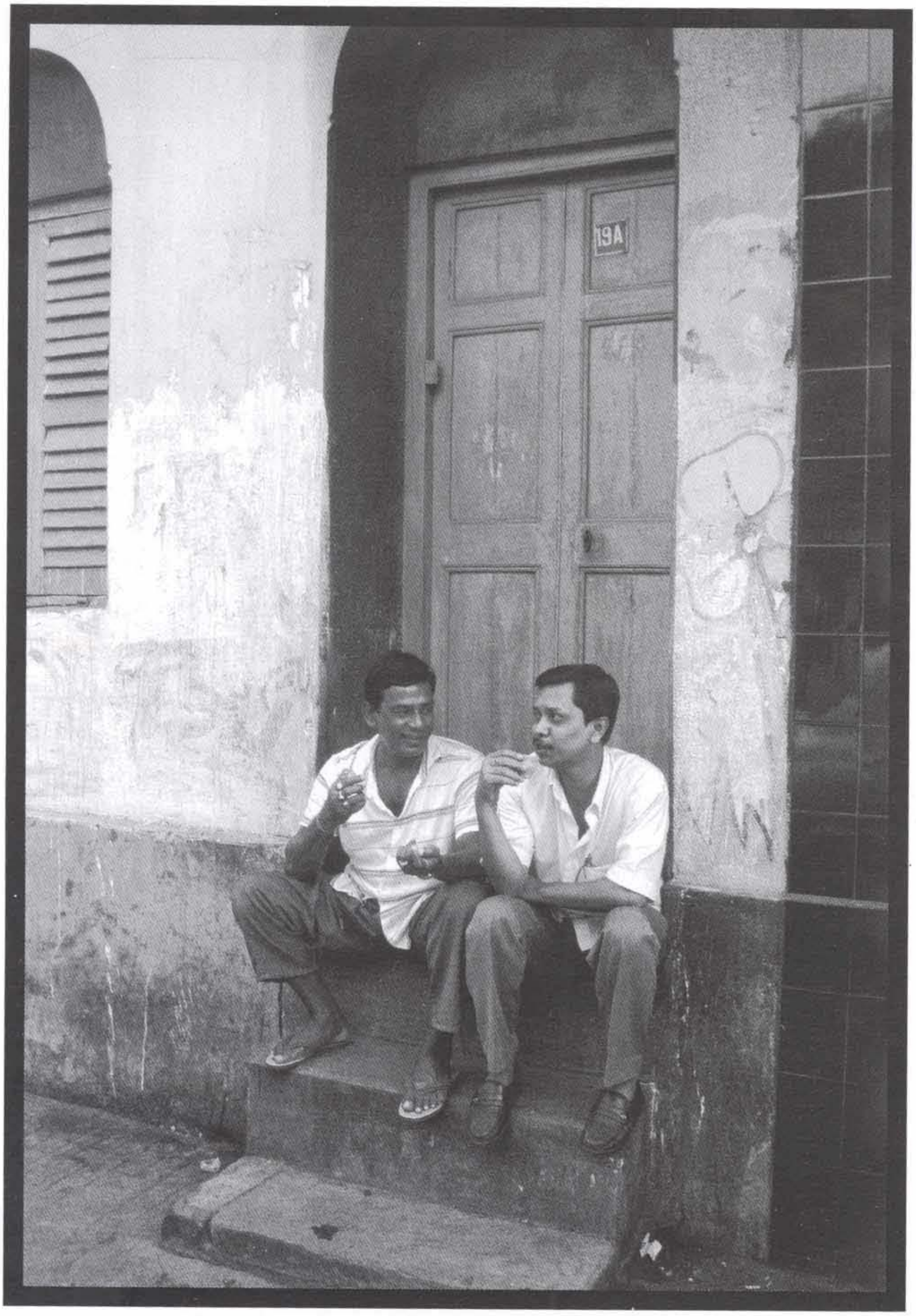


fig.51 Tea and Adda I

Three pictures objectify and arrest a fleeting moment of a "get together and gossip". Camera can travel anywhere, from a ro'ak (an open and cemented place conjoint with the front of a house,) to a "tea cabin" or even to a film studio, an *adda* (the practice of friends getting together for long, informal and unrigorous conversations) over a cup of tea being the common feature in these locations [figs.51-53]. Photographs themselves do not narrate how a cup of tea is related to *adda*, a form of socialization for the Bengali middle class since 1920s.[40] An immense amount of literary investment by poets and memoir-writers like Rabindranath Thakur, Annadashankar Roy (1904-2002) and Shibnarayan Roy (b. 1921) makes the link between *cha* and *adda* memorable and nostalgic.[41] Tea, again, becomes a part of the landscape of social behaviour among the Bengali middle-class. This is a perfect case of artistic simulation. Photography as a visual technique preserves tea drinking during *adda* as a moment of enjoyment. Literature provides such moments with their necessary context.



fig.52 Tea and Adda II



fig.53 Tea in Filmi Adda



fig.54 Tea in Films I

The cinema lobby cards are display items par excellence, meant for the public gaze [figs.54-56]. Their insistent presentation of matinee idols or of climactic moments of the film function like a demonstrative advertisement. Details hardly matters, any signification is exterior to their corpus. A viewer is free to fix his gaze anywhere, either on the beautiful faces of the idols or on the dramatic and crucial scenes depicted for vicarious pleasure. The teacup serves as a detail, its necessity depending on the choice of the viewer. A tradition of description in countless Bengali novels, written particularly by Rabindranath Thakur and Saratchandra Chattopadhyay (1876-1938), had already invested the cup of tea with a stereotypical affective meaning. Literary tradition has its own weight.[42] During 1940s and 1950s, a film was often referred to as a *boi* or a book in common parlance. Film criticism strictly followed the cannons of a book review. Grounded in such an environment, the lobby card of *Chaoa Paoa* depicting matinee idols as a couple engaged in chatting with another senior couple over a cup of tea makes the scene believable and presentable to the audience. Again, tea drinking in the lobby card of *Mahanagar* authenticates sociality among a group of working women. Tea had already acquired the universal connotation of cultural conviviality, turning up



fig.55 Tea in Films IV

in any cinematic scene of social transactions. Tea drinking as a meaningful image was transferred from literature to film without any alteration in its signification.

Before the camera disjointed moments may adhere; more significantly, when the past, already told and proven is captured in the frame, it asserts its presence in an arrested appearance. The lobby card of *Parashuram* depicts Shreela Majumdar, cast in the role of a character belonging to the lower class, holding a bowl of tea to her lips. A question flickers on her face. Like a torn page, the picture is without any immediate context. To a viewer unacquainted with any prior knowledge of the script, her question is indeterminate but suggestive. The face can even interrogate the lineage of the bowl she holds, and the rationale of the act she performs. Has not the written history of transformative images of tea drinking been too linear? Is not a shift from the pragmatic to the aesthetic too smooth? Do daily labour, boredom and gender exploitation succeed in making the taste of a cup of tea pungent? Is it a story still half-told and half-finished a *Ardhakathanak* or *Ek Adhuri Kahani*?



fig.56 Tea in Films V

An Afterthought

I re-read my narrative while sipping a cup of tea. I was supposed to write a straightforward and simple story of the changing images of tea drinking in India. It was intended to supplement and accompany an exhibition on the topic. Have I fulfilled my objective? Or is it impossible to write such a history? It is clear that the emergence of tea as a national drink has depended upon a moral and social acceptance within a culture of domesticity and socialization.[43] It looks as if tea is innocent of social implication and available to all, a marker of both pragmatic and aesthetic qualities. Economic forces, market logic and media investment, literary vision and visual imagination, a number of class preferences and local customs make up the current status of tea. In this sense, the history of tea drinking is also partly a story of the development of civil society and the changing patterns of social gathering and anxieties for addiction, of art and advertisement, and of gender and the family. Each of them has its own history, claiming autonomy within the 'History' of tea drinking in India. Each of them refuses to be subsumed by the other and tries to appropriate within its own history the tale of others. These create a rupture within the linear narrative and question the very way in which the theme has been formed.

Does not this history of tea drinking in India need a prior story of visual practices in India? Does it not demand a resolution of tension and negotiations between literary narrations and visual representations? One may well argue that this logic may be used against any historical narration. What is necessary is an awareness. Even within the limits of space, time and the archives, what a historian actually seeks to present a collage or bricolage (*kutum katam*) where each thing assembled bearsits own imprint and at the same time constitutes a part of the whole.[44] This, as a tea taster would say, is not a skill but depends on an artistic sensibility; It is that which makes the drink delightful.



fig.57

Notes and References:

[All the translations from Assamese, Bengali and Hindi sources are mine]

1.Kumudranjan Mallick, "Ramsuk Tewari", in *Chhotoder Chayanika*, eds. Girijakumar Basu and Sunirmal Basu (Kalikata: Deb Sahitya Kutir, 1338 B.S./1931), 113-115. I thank Professor Arun Kumar Dasgupta for locating the text of the poem wrongly attributed to Sunirmal Basu and lending me a copy of this rare edition.

2. For a general and popular account, see Serena Hardy, *The Tea Book* (Surrey: Whitlet Book, 1993). For tea production and trade in India, see George Watt, *A Dictionary of the Economic Products of India*, Vol. VI, Part 3, 1893 (rpt. New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1972).

3. Percival Griffiths, *The History of the Indian Tea Industry* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967); Anup Matilal, "A Short Note on the History of Domestic Tea Promotion in India" unpublished paper, Kolkata, 2004.

4. Griffiths, 579-629.

5. *Ibid*, 580.

6. In 1879 Thomas Lipton started his business as a grocery shop owner in Glasgow. In 1890 Lipton began to acquire tea estates first in Ceylon, then in India and open subsidiaries in many countries, thus successfully building up a worldwide retail tea trade.

7. Rosinka Chaudhuri, "Modernity at Home: The Nationalisation of the Indian Drawing room, 1830-1930" (Forthcoming in M. Lal ed., *Narratives of Home in South Asian Literature*), paper read at a conference held at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, June 2004.

8. Roy Moxham, *Tea: Addiction, Exploitation and Empire* (New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, 2003), 114-126.

9. Durgacharan Roy, *Devganer Marte Agaman* [*The Arrival of Gods on Earth*], 1886 (rpt. Kolkata: Dey's Publishing, 1984). In 19th century Bengal, the travelogue of the visit of gods was a well-known literary device used for describing the social conditions in India.

10. For a description of the free distribution of tea and various tidbits, one may consult Tarapada Santra, *Smritir Aloy Bengal Nagpur Railway, Sei Samai O Parabarti Rupantarer Alekhya* [*B.N.R. in Memory: An Account of its Past and Consequent Changes*] (Howrah: Asabari Publication, 2002), 74-75, 99, 126, 133.

The nationalists have argued that Lord Curzon, the Governor General of India (1899- 1905), had advised the European Tea Association to explore the domestic market in India. Following his suggestion, the association began to distribute tea at important road junctions of Calcutta city such as Bow Bazar and Thanthania. Prafulla Chandra Roy (Acharya), "Cha-er Prachar O Desher Sarbanash" [Propaganda for Tea and the Disaster for the Country] *Desh*, 7 December 1935 rpt. in *Desh*, 17 November, 2005.

11. Anonymous, "Chitre Bigyapan" [Advertisement in Picture], *Byabsa O Banijya* (*Baisakh*, 1333B.S./1926), 98-99. Brooke Bond & Co. was founded in 1861 by Arthur Brooke.

12. Girishchandra Chattopadhyaya, *Cha Prastut Sikhsha Pranali* [*A Manual for Tea Production*] (Calcutta, 1900). The author was 'a tea-maker' at a plantation in Jirighat, Cachar, Assam.

13. For a biography of Debendranath Mallick, see Narendranath Laha, *Subarna Banik Katha o Kirti* [*The History and Achievements of the Subarnavanik Caste*], Vol.1 (Kalikata: 1940), 177-178. I owe this reference to Debasis Bose. I. B. Gupta of 9 Bow Bazaar Street and Prankissen Chatterjee were two well-known tea merchants in the last quarter of the 19th century. Gupta's Tea was sold in twelve-anna popular packet. Ranabir Ray Choudhury ed., *Early Calcutta Advertisements: 1875-1922* (Calcutta: Nachiketa Publications, 1992), 23, 29.

14. Piya Chatterjee, *A Time for Tea: Women, Labour and Post Colonial Politics on an Indian Plantation* (New Delhi: Zubaan, 2001), 93-94.

15. "Cha*"* [Tea], *Dwijendra Rachanabali* [*Collected Works of Dwijendralal Roy*], Vol.1 (Calcutta: Sahitya Samsad, 1964), 594.

16. Probodh Chandra De, *Ayurvediya Cha* [*Herbal Tea in Hindu Medicine*] (Calcutta, 1321 B.S./1914), 8. The author was a supervisor of the *zamindari* garden in Darbhanga and an active member of the Indian Horticultural Society. In order to popularize herbal tea he published a number of letters in *Bangabasi* from 1904. *Ashwagandha* is the indigenous name of the herb for which he is recommending.

17. For example, see Kazi Nazrul Islam's (1898-1976) poem quoted in Tushar Pradhan, *Charjiling* [*Tea in Darjeeling*] (Calcutta: Sristi, 2001), 26.

18. Krishna Kumar Mitra, *Atmacharit* [*An Autobiography*] edited and appended by Kanailal Chattopadhyay, 2nd ed. (Calcutta: Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 1974), 299.

19. Sitaram Chaturvedi, "Srimati Annie Besant: Jaise Maine Unko Dekha, Soona aur Jana" [Srimati Annie Besant: As I have Seen, Heard and Known Her], *Prangya, Annie Besant Smriti Sankha,* (Kashi: Hindu Vishwa-Vidyalaya, 1996-2001), Vols. 41-42, 12. I owe this reference to Santosh Kumar Shukla of Sanskrit Department, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

20. A.R. Venkatachalapathy, "'In Those Days There Was No Coffee': Coffee Drinking and Middle-class Culture in Colonial Tamilnadu", *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 39: 2 and 3 (2002), 305-306.

21. Prafulla Chandra Roy (Acharya), "Cha Paan o Desher Sarbanash" [Tea-Drinking and Destruction of the Country], 2nd instalment, *Masik Basumati*, (Kartick, 1338 B.S./1931), 1- 5.

An anxiety regarding addiction and the consequent corruption of the family happened to be interwined in the social psyche of the middle class. In the aforesaid article, Prafulla Chandra Roy drew the figure of a house-wife offering a cup of tea to her own child. On the other hand, in Dumdum railway station, a signboard displayed from 1920s shows the figure of a woman covering

her head with her *sari* as a mark of sobriety and sipping a cup of tea. A doggerel as a caption is revealing: "Jahate nai madokata dosh / kintu prane kiba paritosh" [It possesses no addictive quality of alcohol / Yet it is immensely satisfying as a drink"]. I owe this reference to Gour Moulick.

22. Jam Dutta [Jatindra Mohan Dutta], "Kayekti Sekele Galpa" [Few Old Stories], *Jugantar Shamoiki*, 13 July, 1951.

23. "Chahor Gunor Katha, Assam Tea" [Good Qualities of Tea, Assam Tea], *Orunodoi*, March, 1856. The vernacular verse is like this: "I am praying to all big men that though I am a fool, please listen to my words for once. Tea bush and leaves are as valuable as gold, nothing can be compared with them" etc. *Orunodoi: Selected Collection*, ed. by Arupjyoti Saikia (Nagaon: Krantikal Prakashan, 2002), 69-70.

24. Girish Chandra Kaviratna, *Swastha Sahay [An Aid to Health Keeping]*, (Calcutta: Bharatmihir Press, 1309B.S./1902), 57.

25. Communication by Jai Singh Dhanji Rathore, Sevapalli, Santiniketan. I thank Arun Nag for sending this communication.

26. Tushar Pradhan, *op.cit*., 56.

27. Satyajit Ray, *Jakhan Choto Chhilam* [*My Childhood*] (Calcutta: Ananda Publishers, 1389B.S./1982), 42-43. Subimal Roy was a paternal uncle of Satyajit Ray.

28. Ashoka Gupta, *In the Path of Service: Memories of a Changing Society* (Kolkata: Stree, 2005), 31.

29. Sukumar Sen, *Diner Pore Din Je Galo [Days Pass By]*, Vol.1 (Calcutta: Ananda Publishers, 1982), 102-105, 141.

30. Premankur Atarthi, *Mahasthabir Jatak*, Vol.3 (Calcutta: Indian Associated Publishing Co., 1381 B.S./1974), 42-43.

31. Kanippayyr Sankaran Nambutirippad, *Ente Smaranakal* [*My Reminiscences*], Vol. 2 (Kunnamkulam: Panchangam Pushtaka Sala, 1963, rpt. 1999), 319. I am grateful to Udaya Kumar for drawing attention to this reference in Malayalam and translating the relevant passage.

32. Bibhutibhusan Bandyopadhyay, "Marighater Mela"[A Fair at Marighat], *Bibhuti Rachanabali*, Vol.10 (Calcutta: Mitra and Ghosh, 1399 B.S./1992), 272-274. The situation should refer to the mid-1930s as it was the time when the Tea Cess Committee was trying hard to sell tea packets in rural Bengal.

33. I owe this phrase to the celebrated book- Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1985).

34. Anonymous, "The History of the Art in Industry Exhibition in India", *Art in Industry Annual 1942*, ed. Henry Born (Calcutta: D. J. Keymer & Co.).

35. The advertisement published by ITMEB, *Art in Industry*, Exhibition Number, Calcutta, April, 1947.

36. See Narendra Dev, *Rubaiyyat-i-Omar Khayyam* [*The Verses of Omar Khayyam*], illustrated by Purnachandra Chakrabarty (Calcutta: 1333B.S./1926). The book has undergone numerous editions and has been quite popular as a wedding gift. Both Makhan Dutta Gupta and Khaled Chaudhuri have drawn significant illustrations for different versions of this work translated by various writers including Kazi Nazrul Islam.

37. Christopher Pinney, *Photos of the Gods: The Printed Image and Political Struggle in India* (London: Reaktion Books, 2004), 8.

38. Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (London: Vintage, 1993), 4.

39. John Berger, 'Uses of Photography', *About Looking* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 48-63.

40. For a discussion of the social significance of *adda* as a space that seeks to escape the domination of rules and formalities in every day life, see Dipesh Chakrabarty's seminal essay, "Adda: A History of Sociality", in *Provincialising Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 180-213. For perceptive comments on this essay, see Swati Chattopadhyay, *Representing Calcutta: Modernity, Nationalism and the Colonial Uncanny* (London: Routledge, 2005), 182-185.

41. The literary pieces celebrating tea drinking in Bengali language are numerous and remain to be anthologised. The interesting verse written by Nripendra Kumar Basu on tea drinking in the *Sahitya* (Agrahayan, 1329B.S./1922) may be cited as one such instance. Rabindranath Thakur may be considered as a foremost enthusiastist for the promotion of tea culture in Bengal. Around 1940s, returning from China he introduced *Susim-Cha-Chakra* or a tea session named after Su-Sa-Ma (a Chinese friend), for his colleagues and associates in Santiniketan. On that occasion, he specifically mentioned that tea drinking in China is like an 'art' and that culture ought to be emulated in our daily practice. In the aesthetics of tea drinking and the procurement of tea services, an influence of 'Asian Culture' can be clearly discerned in the practices of nationalist elites. His poem (1924) on this regular tea-session is quite well-known. He, however, has also written two lesser-known humourous poems on tea. One of them, named *Palataka* (*The Fugitive*), is on an old man drinking a cup of green tea with half a *ser* of milk to forget the pangs of separation from his granddaughter. Another is called *Chatak* (A bird longing for water as well as a man longing for tea or cha), recalling the occasion of unexpected tea-session in the house of Bidhusekhar Shastri (1878-1959), well-known Sanskrit and Pali Language scholar. [vide *Prahasini* (1343B.S./1936), *Rabindra Rachanabali*, Visva-Bharati edition, Vol.23]. Annada Shankar Roy has written a beautiful poem on *adda* and *cha*, punning on the word 'c*haste*' and 'c*hagye*' (Call for tea and having tea) in order to solve a phonetic problem. See "*Sandhi*" (meaning both alliance and sound blending), Annada Shankar Roy, *Collected Rhymes* (Calcutta: Banisilpa, 1985), 98-99. This volume also includes a few other verses on tea-drinking. I am grateful to Sibaji Bandopadhyay for this reference. Sibnarayan Roy recalls the regular *adda* of the 1950s in the house of Gaurishankar Bhattacharya (1920-1994), noted novelist, when the wife of the host prepared excellent tea for all the members of the *adda*. The aroma and taste of tea permeated the atmosphere of the *adda*. This is a trace etched in the memory of Sibnarayan Roy. Sibnarayan Roy, "Paikparar Adda", *Hriday*, Annual Number, 2003, 9-10.

And who can ever forget Parashuram's (18801960) Jatadhar Bakshi, a cerebral trickster, who is ever-ready to join the *adda* at Calcutta Tea Cabin, Gol Market, New Delhi. He appears out of the blue, takes his share of tea and delicious snacks, tells stories that mock at the intellectual and moral pretensions of *addadharis* (members of *adda*) and vanishes without paying anything. Only an *addadhari* gulping tea and munching snacks can tolerate and even eagerly welcome such a person. Parashuram (Rajshekhar Basu) "Jatadhar Bakshi", *Parashuram Granthabali*, Vol.3 (Calcutta: M.C. Sarkar: 1392 B.S./1986), 91-95.

These instances clearly show how much literary investment became necessary to make tea as an integral part of social imagination of the Bengali middle class.

42. In the novel *Naukadubi* (A boat drowned), published as early as 1906, Rabindranath Thakur employed morning and evening tea sessions as the time and place used by the heroine belonging to the educated middle class for chatting with her prospective suitors in her drawing room. Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay has provided a `tea-paradigm' for the gossip, love and *adda* in his novels. In one of his earlier novels, `*Parineeta*', which inspired several film versions, the two protagonists Sekhar and Girin, are suitors to Lalita, the heroine. Lalita meets Girin in a household tea-session. Although she serves him tea, she herself refuses to have a cup because Sekhar, her next door neighbour, does not approve of a woman drinking tea. The heroine's preference has been made clear through a gesture over a cup of tea. "Parineeta" (1914), *Sarat Sahitya Samgraha*, Vol. 5 (Calcutta: M.C. Sarkar, 1368B.S./1961), 237-238.

One may well ask whether someone less acquainted with the literary tradition of Bengal is not in a better position to interpret the visual representations of tea in terms of what he can anticipate by other means. I simply do not know.

43. A story written by Shibram Chakrabarty (1903-1980), a consummate satirist has highlighted this crucial fact. The very name of this story is revealing: '*Chayer Bigyapan Noy!'* [*This is No Advertisement for Tea!*]. A young urban couple, while on a journey scouted the countryside for a tea-stall. The relationship between a husband and a wife has been skillfully delineated through their mutual conversations on tea-drinking.The story ends with a funny issue unresolved - whether it is morally defensible to steal a packet of tea from a picnic party. This fine piece by Shibram Chakrabarty clearly figures out how tea-drinking has become an important grid around which social sensibilities and imagination of Bengali *bhadraloks* for domesticity have been mapped out. Shibram Chakrabarty, "*Chayer Bigyapan Noy!*" [*This is No Advertisement for Tea!*], *Prabhati*, Puja No., 1348B.S./1941, 293-300. I owe this reference to Arup Sen Gupta.

44. Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972), 16-36. The French term `bricoleur' has no precise equivalent in English. Levi-Strauss used 'intellectual bricolage' to refer to the technique of someone who works with his hands dexterously to tap a heterogeneous repertoire. Abanindranath Thakur's methods of making small sculptures (known as *kutum-katam*) using throwaway things, wire, small logs and dry branches of trees might indicate the beauty of this creative process.

Text Writer's Acknowledgements

As the coordinator of the project and the author of the written text as an accompaniment to the exhibition, I have worked like a member of a collectivity, seeking help from numerous individuals. Foremost among them is Parimal Roy, the legendary collector, who has generously allowed us to use original materials from his collection for the exhibition and the book. I am grateful to Ranen Ayan Dutt, Bhagwandas Ganguli and Buku Munshi for lending some of the exhibits and illuminating discussions. I have benefited from the friendship with Debasis Basu, Indrajit Chaudhuri, Arun Nag, Biswajit Roy and Arupjyoti Saikia for locating relevant archival materials and Sambuddha Bandyopadhyay and Gour Maulick for assistance in field work. I thank the former Chairman and his immediate successor of Tea Board India and as well as its senior officers and staff for the financial and material assistance.

I am grateful to all the staff of CSSSC, both academic and non-academic, for their encouragement and assistance. Prabir Basu, administrative officer, has provided every infrastructural help. Pradip Bose, Partha Chatterjee, Tapati Guha-Thakurta, Manabi Majumdar, Janaki Nair and particularly Keya Dasgupta and Sibaji Bandopadhyay were full of encouragement.

Manas Ray, Prabir Basu, and especially Rosinka Chaudhuri and Udaya Kumar repeatedly have gone through numerous drafts to tune up the language and made substantial comments on the content.

I have heavily depended on the assistance of Abhijit Bhattacharya, perceptive suggestions of Runu Sen, documentary work of Kamalika Mukherjee, Prabir Mukhopadhyay and Priyanka Basu. Bibliographical assistance provided by Siddharthashankar Roy and his staff of the CSSSC's library was quite helpful. Debdulal Banik and Gauri Bandyopadhyay have done necessary typing. Bikash Bose has done the bulk of the photographic printing and copying works for the exhibition. Anupam Chatterjee is ever ready to help.

Special thanks are due to four individuals. Anup Matilal's enthusiasm and persistence have persuaded me to take up the project. Hiran Mitra, despite his busy schedule, has taken up the responsibility for designing the exhibition within a short time. Indira Biswas has tolerated my eccentricities and calmly performed her documentary work essential for publicationn and the exhibition. Finally, it is a genuine pleasure to work with Arup Sen Gupta. I have learnt much from him and he more than once has stopped me from committing howlers. The responsibility for whatever error remains is mine.

Picture Index of the exhibition "From an Imperial Product to a National Drink" held at Gaganendra Pradarshasala between 7-13 December 2005, Kolkata.

a) Where no artist's name, date or any other information appear it is unknown; b) Numbers in italics denote the illustration numbers in this book; c) Arranged in following order: exhibit number, the title, description, medium (except print ads.), size, artists/photographer, source, year and courtesy; d) B.S. means Bangiya Samvat, the Bengali calendar; e) All the sizes are in cms. The top to bottom measurement comes first, followed by the horizontal size.

1.
Tea and the Pot
An enamelled board
46 x 31
c.1950
Parimal Roy

Themes: Tea and the Raj

2./*2*
The General on Horseback
Calendar of Lipton's Tea
Field Marshall H. R. H.
the Duke of Connaught
60 x 35
1922
Parimal Roy

3./*3*
Lipton and the Empire
Print ad. by Lipton's Tea
20 x 15.25
Brand New Advertising Through
The Times of India Sesquicentennial,
ed.by Dileep Padgaonkar,
Bombay 1989
1913
CSSSC

4./*4*
Garden Party
Print ad. by Lipton's Tea
17 x 12.5
same as above
1931
CSSSC

5./*5*
Queen's Own Tea
An advertisement
28 x 40
Spence's Hotel and its Times:
1830 1936
by Harry Hobbs, Calcutta
1936
National Library

6./*6*
Babus' Drawing Room
Wood engraving
10.2 X 15.1
Preo Gopal Das
The artist's scrapbook
c.1920
Christel Das and Arup Sen Gupta

7./*7*
Planter's Raj
Illustration for a calendar
on British Raj
43 x 38
Ranen Ayan Dutt
The artist
1980
The artist

8.
Tea Labourers
Photograph of tea plantation labourers
Chaubattia estate,
Albumen print
20.9 x 23.9
G. W. Laurie & Co.
Oriental and India Office Lib. Coll. London
c.1880
CSSSC

Trained to Drink Time to Oppose

9./*9*
A Perfect Drink
Ad.on preparation of perfect tea by
Indian Tea Market Expansion Board
(ITMEB)
24 x 17
Ananda Bazar Patrika
1949
A.B.P. Pvt. Ltd. / CSSSC

10./*8*
A Perfect Drink
*Chay Banane ki Tarkib*Enamelled signboard
in Urdu
77 x 53
Parimal Roy
c.1940
Parimal Roy

11./*12*
A Tea Maker's Manual
Cover of a book
18 x 11
Cha Prastut Siksha Pranali
By Girishchandra Chattopadhyay
Kalikata, 1st ed.
1900
National Library

12./*13.*
Debendranath Mallick
A portrait
19.75 x 15.25
From *Subarna Banik Katha O Kirti*,
Narendranath Laha, Calcutta
1940
Gautam Bhadra

13./*14*
Little Breakfast I
Print ad. of Lipton's yellow label tea
26.5 x 40.5
P. Dhar
c.1935 40
Parimal Roy

14./*11*
Vacuum Tin
Print ad. by Brooke Bond Tea
11.5 x 27
Early Calcutta Advertisements,
A Selection from the Statesman:
1875 1922, ed.by Ranabir Ray Choudhury,
Calcutta, 1992
1922
CSSSC

15./*15*
Little Breakfast II
Print ad. by Lipton's Tea
8 x 12.5
Layout attributed to Annada Munshi
The Times of India Sesquicentennial,
Bombay,1989
1940
CSSSC

16.
From Tea Garden to the Tea Pot
Print ad. by Lipton's Tea
9 x 6.5
Brand New Advertising Through
The Times of India Sesquicentennial,
ed. by Dileep Padgaonkar, 1989, Bombay
1923
CSSSC

17./*1&1a*
Ramsuk Tewari
Illustration and end piece of poem
"Ramsuk Tewari"
by Kumudranjan Mallick
9.5 x 10.5 and 6 x 3
Phani Bhusan Gupta
Chhotoder Chayanika ed.by
Girijakumar Basu and Sunirmal Basu,
Kalikata
1931
Arun Kumar Dasgupta

18./*16*
A Pucca Tea Addict
Illustration from the article
Cha Paan O Desher Sarbonash
by Prafulla Chandra Roy
12.5 x 9
Prafulla Chandra Roy
Masik Basumati, *Kartick*,
1931
Pranati Dey / CSSSC

19./*17*
Tea as a Health Drink
Enamelled billboard
A railway station in Assam
80 x 56
c.1920
Parimal Roy

20./*10*
A Sales Poster
Enamelled signboard of
Balmer Lawrie Tea
23 x 46
c.1920
Parimal Roy

21./*19*
A Muslim Raees
Enamelled billboard
80 x 55
c.1930
Parimal Roy

A Drink for the Nation

22
Tea as a National Drink
Folder cover of ITMEB
Ananda Bazar Patrika
Puja No.
1936
Bangiya Sahitya Parishat

23
Races of India I
All original artworks:
Tribal woman
Gouache
38.5 x 28.5
c.1940
Parimal Roy

24/*21*
Races of India II
Tamil man
Gouache
39 x 26.5
c.1940
Parimal Roy

25.
Time for Tea
Print ad. by ITMEB
17.5 x 11
Sachitra Bharat
1941
CSSSC

26.
Time for Tea
Print ad. by ITMEB
17.5 x 11
Sachitra Bharat,
1941
CSSSC

27./*22*
Races of India III
Man from the Himalayas
Gouache
39 x 26.5
c.1940
Parimal Roy

28./*20*
Races of India IV
Bengali Babu
Gouache
39.5 x 25.5
c.1940
Parimal Roy

29./*23*
Races of India V
Boat man
Gouache
39 x 26.5
c.1940
Parimal Roy

30.
Races of India VI
West Indian Brahmin
Gouache
39 x 26
c.1940
Parimal Roy

31.
Races of India VII
North Indian Muslim
Gouache
39 x 22
c.1940
Parimal Roy

32.
Tea in Sikh Family
Print ad. by Brooke Bond Tea
28.5 x 10.5
Jugantar
1945
Subodh Basu /CSSSC

33.
Tea in Parsi Family
Print ad. by Brooke Bond Tea
24 x 11
Jugantar
1944
Subodh Basu /CSSSC

34./*24*
100% Swadeshi
Print ad. by ITMEB
21 x 13.5
Annada Munshi
2nd cover of Art in Industry, No.4
1947
Indrajit Chaudhury

35.
Tea as an Universal Drink
Ad. inside the
folded cover by ITMEB
Ananda Bazar Patrika, Puja No.
1939
Bangiya Sahitya Parishat

36./*25*
Tea and Id
Poster by ITMEB
Lithograph
35.2 X 46
Muhammadi, Id Special issue
1938
Syed Abdur Rahman Firdousi Coll./
CSSSC

37./*26*
As Big as a Giant
Print ad. by ITMEB
23 x 17
Betar Jagat
1944
Indira Biswas

38./*28*
Tea and Your Rights
Print ad. by ITMEB
20 x 13
Sachitra Bharat
1937
CSSSC

39./*30*
Puja Greetings
Print ad. by Lipton's Tea
23.5 x 18
Attributed to Makhan Dutta Gupta
Barshik Sishusathi
1953
Gautam Bhadra

40./*31*
The Journey of Tea - 1: Right at Start
Series of ad. by Brooke Bond Tea Co.
26 x 11
Jugantar
1943
Subodh Basu / CSSSC

41.
The Journey of Tea - 2:
During the Growth
26.25 x 10
Jugantar
1943
Subodh Basu / CSSSC

42.
The Journey of Tea - 4:
In the Factory
25.5 x 10.5
Jugantar
1943
Subodh Basu / CSSSC

43./*32*
The Journey of Tea - 6: Screening
26 x 11
Jugantar
1943
Subodh Basu / CSSSC

44.
The Journey of Tea - 8: Blending
26.5 x 11.5
Jugantar
1944
Subodh Basu / CSSSC

45./33
The Journey of Tea - 9:
At the End of the Journey
26 x 11
Jugantar
1944
Subodh Basu / CSSSC

46./*27*
Tea Fights Fatigue
Print ad. by ITMEB
Annada Munshi
Art in Industry
1948
Nirban Ash

47.
Tea and Festival I
Print ad by Valley-View Tea Co. *Jhulan*
23 x 16
Jugantar
1944
Subodh Basu / CSSSC

48./*29*
Tea and Festival II
Print ad. by Valley-View Tea Co. *Dasahara*
23.5 x 16
Jugantar
1944
Subodh Basu / CSSSC

49.
Tea and Festival III
Print ad. by Valley- View Tea Co. *Diwali*
25.5 x 18
Jugantar
1944
Subodh Basu / CSSSC

50./*34.*
Tea as an Ambassador
Print ad. by ITMEB
Annada Munshi
24.25 x 15.5
Hindustan Standard
1947
A.B.P. Pvt. Ltd. /CSSSC

51./*35*
Tea on Road
A 1954 photograph of
a propaganda van
by Tea Board India
History of Indian Tea Industry,
By Percival Griffiths, London
1967
CSSSC

52.
Nilgiri Tea
Ad. by Planters' Company Ltd.
34 x 24
Times of India Annual
1950
Rakesh Sahni

The Nation and its Aesthetics

53./*18&36*
Wealth, Health & Happiness
Panel from an enamelled billboard
depicting the benefits of tea
74 x 49
Sambuddha Bandyopadhyay
Ballygunj Railway Station
1920

54.
Tea Services
Catalogue of tea-sets 27 x 22
Price list No.82, Hall & Anderson, Calcutta
1936 37
Rajarshi Ghosh

55.
Tea Services
Catalogue of tea-sets
27 x 22
Price list No.82, Hall & Anderson, Calcutta
1936 37
Rajarshi Ghosh

56.
Toss's Tea
Enamelled signboard
15.5 x 46.5
c.1940
Parimal Roy

57.
Tea as Solace I
Nityakar jhanjhate chai cha
Print ad. by ITMEB
18 x 11
Attributed to Prafullachandra Lahiri
Shanibarer Chithi
1948
CSSSC

58.
Tea as Solace II
Kaje jakhan mon bashe na,
Print ad. by ITMEB
18 x 11
Attributed to Prafullachandra Lahiri
Shanibarer Chithi
1947
CSSSC

59./*37*
Tea as Solace III
Nityakar jhanjhate chai cha
Print ad. by ITMEB
20.25 x 11
Attributed to Prafullachandra Lahiri
Ananda Bazar Patrika
1948
A.B.P. Pvt. Ltd / CSSSC

60.
Tea as Refreshment
Original artwork for tea ad.
Gouache
38.5 x 25.5
c.1950
Parimal Roy

61.
Tea as Refreshment
Original artwork for tea ad.
Gouache
38.5 x 25.5
c.1950
Parimal Roy

62.
War and Tea I
Yudhha ar cha
Print ad. by ITMEB
23 x 17
Betar Jagat
1944
Indira Biswas

63.
War and Tea II
Yudhha ar cha,
Print ad. by ITMEB
24 x 11
Jugantar
1944
CSSSC

64.
Tea and the Seasons
Print ad. by Central Tea Board (CTB)
depicting Summer
25.25 x 17
Makhan Dutta Gupta
Ananda Bazar Patrika
1950
A.B.P. Pvt. Ltd / CSSSC.

65.
Tea and the Seasons I
Print ad. by CTB depicting Monsoon
Visva-Bharati Patrika
1951
Rabindra Bhavan,
Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan

66.
Tea and the Seasons II
Print ad. by CTB depicting Autumn
Visva-Bharati Patrika
1952
Rabindra Bhavan,
Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan

67./*40*
Tea and the Seasons III
Print ad. by CTB
depicting early Winter
Visva-Bharati Patrika
1951
Rabindra Bhavan,
Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan

68.
Tea and Folk Rhymes I
Print ad. by CTB
Annada Munshi
Visva-Bharati Patrika
1951
Gautam Bhadra

69./*41*
Tea and Folk Rhymes II
Print ad. by CTB
Annada Munshi
Visva-Bharati Patrika
1951
Rabindra Bhavan,
Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan

70.
Tea and Folk Rhymes III
Print ad. by CTB
Annada Munshi
Visva-Bharati Patrika,
1951
Gautam Bhadra

71.
An Invitation for Art works
Ad by ITMEB
24.5 x 15.5
Art in Industry
1947

Buku Munshi

72. /*38*
Anytime Anywhere
10.25 x 7.5
Subal Paul
Art in Industry, Annual
1942
Hiran Mitra

73./*39*
Idyllic Tea
8.25 x 11.25
Bhagwandas Ganguli
Art in Industry, Annual
1942
Hiran Mitra

74.
Moments of Creation I
Six original artworks of
an unpublished ad. campaign
All in Chinese ink, pen & brush
28 x 19
All are attributed to Annada Munshi
c.1950
Parimal Roy

75.
Moments of Creation II
28 x 19
c.1950
Parimal Roy

76.
Moments of Creation III
28 x 19
c.1950
Parimal Roy

77./*44*
Moments of Creation IV
28 x 19
c.1950
Parimal Roy

78./*42*
Moments of Creation V
28 x 19
c.1950
Parimal Roy

79./*43*.
Moments of Creation VI
28 x 19
c.1950
Parimal Roy

80./*45*
Symphony
Print ad. by Lipton's Tea
25.5 x 19
O.C. Gangoly
c.1955 60
Bhagwandas Ganguli

81./*46*
Tamasha
Hoarding of tea for ITMEB
6.25 x 13
Makhan Dutta Gupta
Art in Industry April
1947
Buku Munshi

'Camera Lucida'
82./*47*
The Housewives' Companion
Photograph for a tea campaign
Ahmed Ali
1953
Photographer

83./*48*
Tea for Household
Photograph for a tea campaign
Ahmed Ali
1956
Photographer

84./*50*.
Tea on the Streets
Photograph
Sambuddha Bandopadhyay
2005

85./*49*
Tea Vendor
Photograph
Subrata Lahiri
Chitrabani, Calcutta
July, 1977

86./*51*
Tea and *Adda* I
Photograph, Calcutta
Sambuddha Bandopadhyay
2005

87./*52*
Tea and *Adda* II
Photograph of 'Favourite Cabin'
In College St. Calcutta
Arun Kumar Ganguli
1990

88.
A Tea Shop
Photograph of a tea shop
in Belgachia, Calcutta
Subrata Lahiri
Chitrabani
1977

89.
Tea Cabin
College Street Market, Kolkata
Ranjit Das
2000

90.
Tea in Films
Print ad. by ITMEB featuring Chhaya Debi
21 x 16
Jugantar
1941
Subodh Basu /CSSSC

91./*53*
Tea in Filmi *Adda*
Still taken at a recess during the
shooting of *Mahanagar:* Satyajit Ray,
Madhabi Mukhopadhyay and others
30 x 40
1963
Tarapada Bandyopadhyay
Parimal Roy

92./*54*
Tea in Films I
Lobby card: *Chaoa Paoa*
Uttam Kumar, Suchitra Sen
Jiben Bose and Bharati Devi
30 x 40
27. 02.1959
Parimal Roy

93.
Tea in Films II
Lobby card: *Dui Prthibi*
Uttam Kumar and Tanushri Sankar
30 x 40
Edna Lorenz Pvt. Ltd.
1980
Parimal Roy

94.
Tea in Films III
Lobby card: *Indrani*
Uttam Kumar, Tarun Kumar, Suchitra Sen
and others
30 x 40
1958
Parimal Roy

95./*55*
Tea in Films IV
Lobby card: *Mahanagar*
Madhabi Mukherjee,
Vicky Redwood, Shila Pal,
Anuradha Guha and others
30 x 40
1963
Parimal Roy

96./*56*
Tea in Films V
Lobby card: *Parashuram*,
Sreela Majumdar
30 x 40
1980
Parimal Roy

97./*57*
Endpiece
From a print ad. by Tea Board India
Visva-Bharati Patrika
1956
Rabindra Bhavan,
Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan

Text Index

Picture and text index compiled by Indira Biswas and Arup Sen Gupta.

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This monograph has focused on the multiple genealogies through which tea acquired the unrivalled status of a national popular drink in modern India. Using an array of illustrations, advertisements, photographs, and cinema lobby cards, along with archival and literary documentation, the writer has emphasized the historical processes of percolation and representation that made tea spread across a number of spaces in Indian culture.

